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THE COURT OF SACHARISSA.

(A MIDSUMMER IDYLL.)

CHAPTER I.

WHEN they reached the rustic bridge the Exotic refused to go any further. "I have," said he, "walked enough, and now I shall sit down under that willow and smoke."

The Ambassador smiled a little and gazed across the stream. "I wonder if we should be justified," he began.

"A bridge," remarked the Poet, who was apt in his less inspired moments to begin at the beginning, "is meant to be crossed."

"It looks like a garden," continued the Ambassador; "yew hedges and gravel paths imply at least a gardener."

"Well, who's afraid of gardeners?" said the Man of Truth, who was young and frank.

"I am not afraid," returned the Ambassador mildly, "but I have a delicacy—"

"False delicacy," interjected the Man of Truth setting one foot on the bridge.

"The stream is full of trout," announced the Scribe, who had wandered for some distance up the bank, irrelevantly. This decided the Ambassador, who followed him, took him by the arm and induced him to return. He then led him across the bridge without more hesitation.

"I will wait for the other," said the Poet indicating a figure crossing the meadow in the distance, a figure which conversed with itself and waved its arms.

"Should you," murmured the Exotic, "happen upon strawberries or anything of that nature, bring them back with you in a cabbage-leaf."

The Man of Truth was already some distance up the yew-alley when he stopped. Before him lay a stone fountain in whose midst stood three marble maids, daughters of Danaus, with their heads bent forward as they emptied their pitchers, while the falling drops flashed in the sun. Beyond the fountain were numberless beds of rosebushes planted each according to its kind, soft creamy squares, diamonds gleaming white, and hearts blushing crimson, and beyond the rosary lay a wide expanse of velvet lawn.

"I think," said the Scribe slowly as he looked on the scene, "that you make a better picture for this frame than we; will you lead the way?"

The spirit of the place was doing its work. The Ambassador passed between the roses with easy grace. Unconsciously he raised his left hand towards his heart, until his cane assumed that perfect angle at which a cane becomes something more than

itself, a nice expression of dignity and a promise of deference when occasion shall demand. With his handkerchief he delicately flicked a speck of dust from his sleeve, and then with the first two fingers of his right hand he tapped the lid of an imaginary snuffbox held lightly between the thumb and fore-finger of his left. His back became more courtly, more supple, as of a man prepared at any moment to bow on either hand. He had stepped back two centuries; he was a person of quality again. And so he passed beyond the roses and across the lawn until he came to the old sun-dial and the trellised arbour behind. There he paused and swept a low bow with uncovered head, while the Scribe and the Man of Truth, who had followed in his steps, removed their hats with what elegance they could; the consciousness of two hundred heavy years was upon them.

A slender figure appeared at the door of the arbour and a pair of gray eyes looked from under long lashes at the bowing trio with open wonder, with which, as the curve of two red lips seemed to hint, was perhaps mingled some amusement. Then the figure curtsied low and stood, cream-coloured and softly outlined against the dark background, waiting.

"Madam," said the Ambassador, "we are infinitely yours to command."

"Sir," she replied, "I am deeply sensible of the honour," and waited for further explanations.

"My friends and I," continued the Ambassador, "have, I fear, unwittingly trespassed upon your privacy." She inclined her head as an invitation to proceed. The Ambassador paused for a moment; the situation was not of the easiest. "Our explanation—" he began, but checked himself with a slight cough. "The explanation for our intrusion—" he paused again.

"There isn't any," said the Man of Truth in a loud aside.

This the Ambassador was bound to admit. "In effect, Madam, on consideration I find to my everlasting sorrow that it is even as my friend has suggested, and we have positively no explanation to offer."

"We simply came," explained the Scribe.

"Across a bridge," added the Man of Truth.

There was a momentary gleam in the gray eyes and the red lips curved a little more.

"Therefore," said the Ambassador, "we have to offer our most abject apologies." She inclined her head again as though to intimate that apologies were not out of place. "Our most abject apologies," he repeated. "But," he continued with another profound bow, "while I assure you that we are most penitent for our ill-doing, will you pardon me if I say that it is an error which we shall never be able wholly to regret?"

It may be that there was in her face the question which the Ambassador had expected. He deemed it necessary to explain. "Because," said he with yet another bow, "it has given us the unparalleled felicity of being permitted to make those apologies to which you have so graciously listened."

At this she laughed outright. "Is that why you came?" she asked.

The Ambassador weighed the chances. "Alas, Madam," it seemed safer to say, "we cannot excuse ourselves so. We came in ignorance." It occurred to him to prepare for eventualities. "I very much fear, too, that others of our party wander at this moment in your lovely garden, also in ignorance,—ignorance as yet undispelled by the light." He punctuated his conclusion with another bow.

She glanced round the lawn in

what seemed some slight apprehension while she repeated the word "Others?"

"Three others," said the Man of Truth in accurate confirmation.

"You will comprehend therefore," continued the Ambassador boldly, "how great must have been our ignorance in that we are, as you observe, but three. Had we not been in ignorance, undoubtedly we should all have come—to apologise; even if there had been no bridge," he added as an appropriate after-thought.

She pursed her lips. "Where are they?" she asked, still looking round.

"We left them," replied the Ambassador guardedly, "on the other side of the stream."

"Smoking," commented the Man of Truth.

She pondered a little; then, "Can they bow too?" she enquired.

"Passably well, Madam," the Ambassador answered, with the air of one who is sure of his pupils but not unduly proud on that account.

"It seems hardly fair—" she began thoughtfully, and hesitated. The Ambassador was all attention. She seemed to come to a sudden determination. "It seems hardly fair that only three of you,—I think you ought to go and find the others and bring them here—to apologise." She laughed as she added the words, and went on more seriously; "While you are doing so I will see about tea."

It is the most difficult thing in the world to retire from the presence gracefully, but the Ambassador accomplished it as though his days were entirely devoted to the service of royalty. He led the way back across the lawn to the rosary, while the others followed him, their shoulders a little shrugged to mitigate the state of critical eyes in the rear.

"Tea," remarked the Man of Truth, when they were out of earshot "good!"

"The teapot should be made of silver," murmured the Scribe thinking of the fitness of things.

The Man of Truth reproved him; "A silver pot makes bad tea," he asserted.

The Ambassador said nothing but strode on till he reached the fountain. There a curious sight met his eyes. In the middle of the path stood a son of the soil, impassive, with a fork in one hand and a wicker basket in the other. Before him stood the Mime and the Poet checked in their onward career and obviously indignant. The Mime was speaking with arms waving and eyes a-kindle.

"Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,
How dares thy harsh rude tongue
sound this displeasing news?"

The aptness of the quotation was lost on the son of the soil; he repeated the displeasing news. "These grounds is private," said he.

"The word *private*—" began the Poet but he was somewhat rudely interrupted.

"You can't come in here," said the man with the fork, "so you'd best turn about and go back where you came from."

"O man of mud," protested the Mime,

"I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament."

"Round you turn and out you go," said the man of mud raising his fork, an action which somewhat affected the constancy of the northern star, for he backed a little explaining to the Poet that "Hercules himself must yield to odds."

The Ambassador saw that it was time to intervene. He stepped forward and said with magnificence:

"Kindly allow these gentlemen to pass; they are friends of mine."

An intellect of higher grade would have succumbed at once but Cerberus was not impressed. "Oh, are they?" he said. "And who are you?"

The Ambassador perceived that this was one of those occasions on which the shadow of diplomacy is not sufficient without the substance. "I," he announced, placing a thumb and forefinger in his waistcoat-pocket, "am," he continued, withdrawing them, "a guest at this house," he concluded extending them towards the gardener, whose hand instantly dropped the basket and came to meet them. The argument was entirely successful; Cerberus pulled his forelock and "hoped to be excused but the gentlemen turning up so sudden he couldn't but think—" at which point the Ambassador at once accepted and dismissed his apologies, and turning round led the party towards the arbour.

"You've got to bow, and you've got to apologise," said the Man of Truth as they went.

"To whom?" asked the Poet.

"To her," said the Scribe guardedly.

"Who is she?" the Mime enquired not without reason.

"The person who's going to give us tea," explained the Man of Truth. "She's pretty," he added with some finality.

There was no time for further explanations for they were already close to the arbour, at whose door a wicker table loaded with silver and china denoted that tea was ready. Half a dozen basket chairs were set in a semicircle round the table, while the giver of the feast herself was seated just within the arbour. The Ambassador motioned to the two new-comers to step forward and make their salutation. The bow of the Mime was a wonderful thing; while it missed something of the quality of the Am-

bassador's, in quantity it exceeded the efforts of all the party put together. It suggested the oriental prostration saving only that no part of him but his feet actually touched the ground. The obeisance of the Poet on the other hand was somewhat tempered with the consciousness of genius in difficulties, and therefore possessed more of dignity than of grace. The lady made smiling acknowledgment and waited for them to speak.

"Apologise," prompted the Man of Truth with his eye on the tea-table.

"The essence of an apology," began the Poet at the beginning, "consists in the certitude of the person offending—" here the Ambassador felt called upon to interpret. "My friend," he said, "wishes to convey to you that he feels how insufficient are mere words to atone for the gravity of his trespass."

She accepted the interpretation and glanced at the Mime who was already in an attitude. His apology was something unexpected. "Whip me, ye devils," he began,

"From the possession of this heavenly sight!

Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!

Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!"

Fortunately he had to pause to consider how he should go on, and the Ambassador was able to calm his evident fears. "My other friend," he said, "who has missed his vocation, is apt to indulge in figures of speech, but what he means is that he is very sorry."

She laughed, still however keeping a nervous eye on the Mime, whose tension, now that he had said his say effectively, appeared to relax. Then she made a little speech. "Gentlemen, I am very glad of the fortunate accident which has enabled you to

come to-day. Please sit down, and let me give you some tea."

While the Ambassador was handing round cups and cakes a thought struck him. "Dear me," he exclaimed, "I had quite forgotten!"

"What?" asked his hostess.

"The other member of our party," he replied. "I suppose he is still by the bridge."

The Man of Truth expressed his profound conviction that tea, even as a mere abstract distant idea, would be more than sufficient to ensure the appearance of the Exotic, and the others murmured assent.

"What did you call him?" she asked. "The Exotic? What a curious name," she added on learning that she had heard correctly.

"He is a curious person," said the Man of Truth, as though he himself were puzzled.

At this moment a voice reached them from the other side of the lawn. It was, in fact, the Exotic's and it complained: "Where are you, and where are my strawberries?" Catching sight of the group he came towards it. He showed no visible signs of surprise at finding his friends seated at tea on the lawn of a stranger, and it so chanced that he could not see the lady herself who was hidden from him by the side of the arbour.

"Oh, there you are," he said, as he came nearer. "I met a gardener-man who said I was trespassing. So I said, 'Am I?' and he said, 'You are.' So I asked him how he knew, and he said he knew very well and I must go away. Then I asked him if he had ever heard the tale of the Considerate Kurd, and he said he didn't want to hear any tales. So I began to tell it to him, and I hadn't got any further than the Careful Camel when he interrupted me and asked me if I was a friend of *his*, and he winked.

I didn't know what he meant, but I said I was and I winked; and then he begged my pardon and I came on. And now I want my strawberries in a cabbage-leaf."

To this curious history she listened with round eyes, and then she whispered to the Man of Truth, "Now, I understand,—a little." With that she jumped up from her chair, took a plate of strawberries from the table, and coming out of the arbour confronted the Exotic. "I'm so sorry," she said, "we haven't a cabbage-leaf; will a plate do? If not, I can easily get a leaf from the kitchen-garden."

To do the Exotic justice, though he was a good deal taken aback, he accepted the plate of strawberries with murmured thanks; then taking off his hat, he looked helplessly at the Ambassador, who preserved an admirable gravity and relieved the situation by saying,—“Owing to my remissness my friend of course does not understand that you have so honoured us as to ask us to tea. It is my fault, my fault entirely; I fear I have again to ask your forgiveness.”

The Man of Truth could no longer contain himself and gave vent to mighty laughter. As at a signal, everybody joined in; even the Exotic smiled patiently, and took the opportunity to drop into the vacant chair, where, with fine presence of mind, he at once consumed a strawberry.

When at last the laughter had subsided to a general smile the lady with a curiosity which, in the circumstances, was only natural, opened conversation with a question. "Are you all staying in this neighbourhood?" she asked the Ambassador.

"No," he said, "we have come down from London."

"For the afternoon," added the Scribe.

"By train," explained the Man of Truth, somewhat needlessly.

"We commonly spend an afternoon in the country once a week," continued the Ambassador. "We find it an excellent tonic for the brain."

The Exotic held a strawberry poised midway between his plate and his lips while he threw light on the situation. "We go to a terminus," he said, "and find out the names of places where trains go to. Then if we like the look of a name we go there. We went to Shepherd's Bush once," he continued in hushed reminiscence. "We thought we should find a nice common and sit under the bush enjoying the air and talking to the shepherd."

"And did you?" she asked, laughing.

"No," he replied, "we found a patch of grass in the middle of houses surrounded by a railing. There was no air and no bush, and no shepherd, and the inhabitants were clinging to the railing." She looked her question. "They were intoxicated," he said wearily, as though the memory bored him.

"And what did you do then?" she inquired.

"We retired into the station," he said, "and waited until there was a train back to town." With that the Exotic returned to his strawberry and silence.

The Man of Truth who had been listening with unconcealed surprise could no longer refrain from speech. "We've *never* been to Shepherd's Bush," he said in an injured tone.

The Exotic was roused to one more effort. "That was before you were thought of," he said reprovingly to the Man of Truth. "But we are never going there again," he admitted to the lady. "We have found out how to avoid it. We never pay less than four shillings for our tickets now because anything under that is sure to be houses, and we never go

to a place that is named after a person because that attracts people so. If there had not been a shepherd with a desire for notoriety we should have found a common and a bush and air." He sank back exhausted with the closeness of his reasoning.

"I think you are wise," she said kindly. Then she turned to the Ambassador with an irrelevance that was flattering to him at least. "Oh, I do hope you take care of them."

The implied compliment may have been only comparative, but the Ambassador by no means rejected it. He said modestly that he did his best. The Man of Truth who seemed a little restive was about to say something, when the Mime suddenly changed the current of talk.

"In this garden I could act for ever," he exclaimed with rapture.

"Won't you act something now?" she suggested politely, but the others raised a protest.

"For ever is such a long time to sit through," said the Scribe.

"And it would be for ever if you once let him begin," said the Man of Truth, brutal but convinced. It may be that she had something of the same feeling, for she did not press the point.

"It is indeed most stimulating," said the Ambassador, smiling at the Poet, who, having after a long search found his note-book, was feeling in all his pockets for a pencil. He was quite lost to his surroundings, and the Ambassador explained to her in a low tone that sudden inspiration always had this effect on him.

Meanwhile the Scribe had also evidently been revolving something in his mind, and at last he uttered his thought. "You have a pretty trout-stream at the bottom of your garden," he said.

"Are you fond of fishing?" she

asked following the Scribe's suggestive remark to its logical conclusion. He admitted that it was so. "Oh, you ought to come again and fish," she said. "Yes, you must, and catch me some trout. I'll give you some tea, so it will be a fair exchange," she laughed. "There is no one here to catch them. Couldn't you all come and help him?" she added impulsively. "In the country"—but her sentence remained unfinished. Perhaps she had intended an explanation of her motives in giving the invitation. Instead, however, she looked at the Ambassador for an answer.

"Our pardon is complete," he returned without hesitation; "we are permitted to re-enter Eden."

"I will see that no sentinel bars the path," she said with a smile. "Will you come then this day next week?" The Ambassador promised for his party. "Perhaps," she hinted looking at the Poet who had found his pencil, "the poem will be finished by then."

"It shall be," the Ambassador took upon himself to say.

The general enthusiasm was by this time communicated in some degree even to the Exotic, who said suddenly with more energy than he had yet displayed, "I feel as if I could narrate the history of the Considerate Kurd."

"Oh do," said the lady, but even as the Exotic was framing the word *considerate* the Ambassador had consulted his watch and was upon his feet.

"Alas, Madam," he said, "time wears away, and your train service is something exacting. I find we have only twenty minutes in which to get to the station, and so we must tear ourselves away from this enchanted spot. Please allow me to offer our united thanks for your courteous hospitality and for this

delightful afternoon spent so unexpectedly in Eden."

"Well, if you have to catch a train," she replied, "I won't try and keep you, but come earlier next week if you can. I want to hear that story," she said laughingly to the Exotic.

"It shall be told," he said with determination. She held out her hand to the Ambassador who took it, bowing low. The others followed his example, and then they passed across the lawn back towards the rosary.

"Remember to come early," she cried after them. The Ambassador turned and acknowledged her courtesy and then followed the others past the fountain and along the yew-alley. They walked without speaking till they reached the bridge.

Here the Man of Truth gave utterance to the problem that was troubling him. "I wonder who she is," he said.

"Her name," said the Poet dreamily, "is Sacharissa." It was felt that this was one of his more inspired moments, and the truth of his statement was admitted in silence.

CHAPTER II.

"I HOPE you have not forgotten the poem," said Sacharissa to the Poet. There had in truth been no danger of his forgetting it. The Ambassador, having pledged his word in the matter, had in the course of the week paid more than one visit to the Poet and, partly by guile, partly by precept, had succeeded in overcoming the natural tendency of genius to regard a few desultory words written in pencil upon a scrap of paper as a finished masterpiece. He had even caused him to write the completed work in ink on a fair quarto sheet and had placed it in his

own pocket for its better preservation. So now it was with an easy mind that he saw his party seated as before in the hospitable chairs; he had brought it through all the manifold dangers of rail and road without accident (unless the loss of the Exotic's ticket can be considered an accident), and having fulfilled his promise to his hostess he was content.

"He hasn't forgotten it," said the Man of Truth. "He wanted to, but the Ambassador stood over him till he finished it."

Sacharissa looked her amused approbation at the Ambassador, who with a tolerant smile suggested that the Man of Truth was somewhat given to exaggeration.

"Not at all," he returned. "I heard you threaten to finish it yourself."

"I don't think you can have heard quite that," said the Ambassador. "I may perhaps have asked our friend if he needed any assistance."

"Well, it's the same thing," persisted the Man of Truth.

"Are you a poet too?" asked Sacharissa. The Ambassador deprecated the idea with a gesture and murmured something about "occasional verses."

"It is one of our traditions," remarked the Scribe, "that the Ambassador can do everything."

"He is a perfect Autolycus," confirmed the Mime.

"Is that quite a compliment?" Sacharissa asked doubtfully.

"It is so meant," the Scribe explained. "For him the merit of a character largely depends on its acting possibilities."

Any retort the Mime might have made was rendered impossible by the Poet, who had not been listening to the conversation, but now suddenly remembered that the lady had asked him a question. "It would have

been impossible for me to forget," he assured her earnestly. Everybody laughed and he looked round a little bewildered.

Sacharissa came to his aid. "It is very nice of you to say so," she said kindly: "Will you read it to us?"

The poet expressed his readiness to do so, and felt in his pockets. His incipient alarm was quieted by the Ambassador who handed a sheet of paper across to him. Sacharissa noticed the action with a quiet smile. The Poet looked at the paper in surprise, but his brow cleared when he found that his own handwriting was upon it, and without more delay he began to read.

At trysting-gate, my April maid so fair,
Alone I wait, thou cam'st not there;
Why so unkind to me?

Thy heart yet sleeps; ah, didst thou know

A lover's pain,

A lover's woe,

Thou wouldst not use me so disdain-fully.

Sunshine and shower change all the April day,

Sunshine thy *yea* and shower thy *nay*;

Thou'rt all caprice to me.

All smiles one hour, then nought but scorn,

Thou fancy free,

And I love-lorn.

Thy waywardness I follow mournfully.

I woo: thou'lt pout thy lip to flout me,
Such lips as ne'er should frame a *nay*.
Though I may doubt thou can'st not doubt me;

Awake thy heart, 'tis all I pray.

Ah, make thy yoke less hard to bear,
For Love's dear sake, some pity spare,—
Is love to thee but play?

Thy slave am I, then mercy show.

Ah, bid me stay,

Or bid me go.

Take not my heart to break and throw away.

"Thank you," said Sacharissa simply, when he had finished, "it is charming."

The Man of Truth pounced on an anachronism. "Why do you make her an April Maid?" he asked in a combative tone. "This isn't April."

"Isn't it?" asked the Poet dreamily.

"No, she ought to be Queen of Roses or something like that, that is if you mean it for Sacharissa. I suppose you *do* mean it for Sacharissa?" he added in a manner that left no doubt as to the wound that would be inflicted on his feelings by a negative answer. But the Poet had returned to his meditations and answered nothing.

"Would it be indiscreet of me," began the lady, "if I asked who Sacharissa is?"

"Not at all," said the Man of Truth. "Sacharissa—"

The Ambassador averted the bludgeon. "Sacharissa," he said, "is the lady celebrated by the poet Edmund Waller. My friend finds in his own muse something akin to that of the old poet, and so has borrowed his abstract divinity." Therewith he looked rapiers at the Man of Truth who was opening his mouth again but subsided on encountering the glance.

"I understand," said Sacharissa slowly, as though she did not understand at all. "What a bad hostess I am," she exclaimed a moment after. "I quite forgot it last week, and now I am forgetting it again to-day." She jumped up and reached a silver box from a table inside the arbour. She handed it to the Ambassador. "Please smoke if you care to," she said.

"This is indeed kind," said the Ambassador warmly, as he passed the cigarettes round, so warmly in fact that she smiled.

The necessity of taking and lighting a cigarette spurred the Mime to activity. "I like poems about love," he announced. "I have loved," he

continued with a profound sigh. Sacharissa glanced at him through her eyelashes.

"You suffered?" enquired the Ambassador politely.

"Unutterably," groaned the Mime. "She was fair, a daughter of a hundred Squires. She sat her untamed steed like some Brunnhilde of old. I loved her to distraction." He warmed to his narrative and lived it all again. "'Wilt thou be mine?' I entreat. She softens, she half yields, I take her hand,"—here he grasped the cigarette-box, thereby embarrassing the Exotic who was about to take a cigarette—"but no, she will not, she draws it away." The Ambassador rescued the box. "'I, a daughter of a hundred Squires, will wed no man who cannot follow me to the death.' I tremble, I turn pale, but I am resolved. The horses are at the door. Booted and spurred I climb into the saddle." The better to illustrate this process he extricated himself from his chair, a display of energy which the Exotic seemed to resent. Sacharissa kept a watchful eye on the Mime, unconsciously edging a little in the direction of the Ambassador.

"Tally ho! we are away," continued the Mime. The Poet started, the suddenness of the conversation to which he awoke surprising him. "The hounds stream out before us. She leads the field. But see, right in our path lies, dark and grim, a monster hedge. No gate! No gate!" At this point the sense of impending tragedy came upon the Poet, and he nervously clutched the arms of his chair. "Her courage but rises higher in the face of death. Alas that one so fair—but no! she lifts her horse, she rises in the air, she is over, she is gone!" The Mime leaned forward peering eagerly into the distance, and after a moment of breathless suspense,

during which the distance between Sacharissa and the Ambassador sensibly decreased, he threw up his arms and crashed backwards into his chair. The Exotic delicately applied his handkerchief to his brow.

"That's not *your* chair," observed the Man of Truth reprovingly. "But what happened to you?"

"I fell off," said the Mime, whose enthusiasm had evaporated.

"On her side of the hedge?" eagerly asked the Poet.

"No," he replied curtly.

"And the lady?" enquired the Scribe after an interval.

"She married," the Mime answered.

"The son of a hundred Squires, I suppose?" said the Scribe. The Mime nodded and relapsed into gloomy silence. Sacharissa moved her chair back to its original position.

"I can see her still," began the Poet who seemed to have been thoroughly roused by the Mime's story. The Ambassador was about to address Sacharissa but he paused; it might be that the Poet had stumbled upon one of his more fortunate moments. He glanced at the Man of Truth to signify that interruptions would be out of place, and the Poet was allowed to continue.

"I was sauntering through the cornfields, whose ripe ears rustled faintly as the evening breeze sighed over them with a last caress. The harvest-moon touched with silver the narrow pathway that stretched before me into the shadow of the distant trees; the poppies drooped in slumber. Only the moths were stirring; to and fro they danced by the hedgerows under the moon seeking in fairy courtship their humble mates, the glow-worms, who timorously quenched their light at my approach. The spirit of the evening claimed me for its own; I could not hasten, and half way across the field I lingered gazing

into the shadows of the grove. She whom I had long sought must surely be waiting me there; she would be leaning on the gate while the soft evening breeze gently kissed her brow and delicately caressed her hair. She awaited my coming, making the night lovelier by her presence.

"I tried to picture her as I stood, and my heart yearned for her. Without her I was alone; she was the completion of all things. I wondered if she was dreaming of my coming, dreaming that we two should together find out the world's old secret, the secret that lies hid from every eye, that but few can seek and none can find alone, for only by love to those that love is even a glimpse of it revealed.

"The stars smiled on me. I uncovered my head; it seemed that the hour was sacred, full of a divine peace. I knew that I stood on the threshold, and I knew that she held the key. And I watched long.

"But above the shrill cry of a bat rang out, and the calm was broken, the spell shattered. He sought his prey amid the pale fluttering moths that danced in the moon seeking only honey of flowers to sweeten their little lives. Night was profaned; her ancient peace was gone like a dream, and the fear of death was abroad. Sadly I retraced my steps."

The Poet stopped, having apparently finished. The Man of Truth looked puzzled. "What about her?" he asked.

"About whom?" enquired the Poet.

"Why, the lady leaning on the gate," demanded the Man of Truth indignantly. "You said you retraced your steps."

"I don't think she can have been there." The Poet searched his memory. "I don't remember seeing her."

Sacharissa looked at him in some astonishment, while the Man of Truth reproved him. "People shouldn't begin telling a story unless they've got a story to tell," he said with vigour. But the Poet had become silent and returned no answer.

The Exotic came to the rescue of the Poet with a contented sigh. "I liked it," he said. "It was beautifully restful. Please tell it again." A loud but inarticulate protest came from the Man of Truth.

"I presume," said the Scribe, "that you have had your little revenges. Has she written a poem about the trysting-gate too?"

The harassed Poet looked round for aid; he half repented his excursion into prose. "I don't quite understand," he said in bewilderment.

"Were you really expecting to meet a lady?" asked Sacharissa.

"On such a night all things seemed possible," was the Poet's apologetic explanation.

"I knew there wasn't anyone," declared the Man of Truth. "It's a pity you tried to make a story of it."

The Poet was goaded to retort. "Perhaps you can tell a better story yourself," he suggested.

"Well, I could tell something that really happened at any rate," returned the Man of Truth, assuming an elderly expression. "I also have loved. It's quite true," he persisted, annoyed at the merriment he had provoked.

The Ambassador helped him. "Tell us about it," he said, "if you can bring yourself to speak of it."

"Oh yes, I can do that," he returned, "though it still annoys me. I was at the seaside, and there was a girl who walked on the pier. She was pretty and I wanted to know her, but I couldn't get an introduction anyhow. So I asked the Exotic what I should do, and he said he would help me out, and he told me

of an infallible dodge of automatic introduction." The Man of Truth paused to refresh his memory. "I can't quite remember how it went. You got a bangle—what was it?" He turned to the Exotic who looked at him innocently amazed at being brought into the story. He was not however suffered to escape, and under pressure he began to speak in a parable.

"She was veiled, as are all the women of that sunny land," he said with apparent irrelevance, "but I could see her eyes, and they roused in me a curiosity, and a desire to cultivate her acquaintance. As neither she nor her attendant were proceeding with any unseemly haste, I bestirred myself to walk towards the bazaar whither they too appeared to be going. I seated myself in a booth and meditated over my coffee and a cigarette. It so chanced that they entered the next booth wherein were displayed the wares of a dusky jeweller, and I could listen to the bargaining. The purchase eventually made was a necklace of amber and turquoise, almost worthy of the probable charms of its future resting-place. As they departed I noticed that a precisely similar ornament still remained in the jeweller's stall, and it may have occurred to me that by purchasing it and exhibiting it to the owner of the other at our next meeting—"

The Man of Truth broke in impatiently. "That wasn't it at all," he said. "I know now. You go into a shop and buy an imitation gold bangle for a shilling. Then you go on to the pier until you see the girl, and you walk a few yards behind her. Presently you catch her up and apologise for interrupting her and say you think she must have dropped one of her bangles. Well, she says she hasn't and suggests that it must have been the lady over there; but you

insist, and say you know it isn't because you have asked her. Then you ask what on earth you are to do with the thing which you suppose is valuable. Of course she doesn't know and a bright idea strikes you; you ask her if she would be so very kind as to give it to the attendant at the ladies' cloak-room, to be left till called for. She says she will, and you thank her very much and go away. Next day you meet her again and ask if the bangle has been claimed, and she says no, and the day after that you say you have asked after it and find it is still there. And so on for several days until you and she have a sort of joint interest and are quite on a footing."

"A very dishonest proceeding," commented the Ambassador with much disapproval.

"Yes," admitted the Man of Truth, "it was the Exotic's idea, but I did it quite honestly. I had a *real* gold bangle."

"Did you buy it with a *real* shilling?" asked the Scribe.

The Man of Truth took no notice of the question. "I borrowed it from my sister," he explained, somewhat to Sacharissa's amusement.

"Well, did you get your introduction?" she asked.

"No," he replied indignantly, "I took it up to her and said I thought she must have dropped it, just as the Exotic told me." The Man of Truth became furious. "It was the most dishonest thing I ever heard of," he said. "She thanked me very much and said she thought she must have, and she took my *real* gold bangle and walked away."

"It served you perfectly right," said the Ambassador when he had recovered himself.

"What did you do?" asked the Mime.

"I was too astonished to move for a bit," said the Man of Truth, "and

when I did at last go after her she was gone, and I couldn't find her anywhere."

"What could you have done if you had found her?" asked the Poet.

"I should have told her that it wasn't her bangle after all," he replied, "and that I had made a mistake, and I should have taken it away again."

The Ambassador, perceiving that the Man of Truth was in some danger of losing his reputation for chivalry, asked the Exotic if he too had not had some experience.

"Yes, I also have loved," he admitted, smiling sweetly at the pleasing recollection. "But it could not be," and he shook his head in tender reminiscence.

"Do tell me about it," said Sacharissa with sympathy, and the Exotic yielded and began to narrate.

"I saw her go past the window, and I loved her to distraction; but she had a green feather in her hat, and so I realised that it could not be."

"Is that all the story?" asked Sacharissa, after they had waited a considerable time for further details.

"Yes," said the Exotic.

Sacharissa looked at him with pity. "Have you ever got over it?" she asked.

"Never," he declared.

"You must be very impressionable," she suggested.

"I am," he said; "a green feather has always had a disastrous effect on me." Sacharissa laughed, and the Exotic looking pained at her heartlessness composed himself to silence again. But the Ambassador felt that duty had been shirked.

"Is that the whole of your experience?" he asked in a tone that admitted of no evasion.

"No," the Exotic confessed. "I loved again; but I do not feel strong enough to tell the story now." He

looked pleadingly at Sacharissa, who smiled a gentle reproof at the Ambassador. "But," he continued with more energy as a thought struck him, "I will narrate a little tale that has some love in it though it did not happen to me personally. It is called the Tale of the Considerate Kurd."

The groan of the Man of Truth was unheard by Sacharissa, who cried, "Oh yes! That is the story you promised me. Please tell it," she added with a pretty gesture, half entreaty, half command.

The Mime, with a readiness of resource that would have graced any stage, attempted to pass the cigarette-box across to the Scribe and in doing so clumsily upset it into the chair of the Exotic to his great discomfort. The Ambassador, taking up the cue, apologised as though he had done it himself, and to cover the confusion caused in picking up the cigarettes observed to Sacharissa that he saw the tea-tray coming.

She looked up. "Oh so it is," she said. "Well, we will have the story after tea. Will you help me to get the table out?" And so the danger was for the moment averted.

CHAPTER III.

THE Exotic finished his third cup of tea and lighted a cigarette. "I will now," he said, "proceed to relate, as I promised, the Tale of the Conscientious Curate and the Superfluous Umbrella." It should be mentioned in passing that during tea the Ambassador had found an opportunity of a few private words with the Exotic.

Sacharissa looked surprised, "That was not the one you promised," she said. "It was the Considerate something."

"Oh, did I say *considerate*?" said the Exotic. "Well, I will relate

the Tale of the Considerate Curate and the Superfluous Umbrella."

"Oh, but it wasn't," cried Sacharissa; "it was something beginning with a K."

"Curate," suggested the Exotic with mild determination. In spite of the obvious danger the Man of Truth could not resist giving utterance to his conviction that *curate* did not begin with a K.

"And there was nothing about an umbrella," Sacharissa persisted.

"It isn't really an umbrella," said the Exotic in a soothing tone; "it's a parasol."

Sacharissa looked helplessly at the Ambassador who fully lived up to his title. "I am afraid," he said in a low voice, "we must let him have his way; if he has once made up his mind, there is no shaking him. If you cannot move him, how should the efforts of the rest of us prevail?" The true diplomatist only shows as much of his hand as is necessary. Sacharissa submitted, while she acknowledged the compliment with a little puzzled smile.

"I will relate," said the Exotic firmly, "the Tale of the Conscientious Curate and the Superfluous Umbrella. The incident came under my notice that day I told you about when we went to Shepherd's Bush."

"We didn't," grumbled the Man of Truth.

"I think I explained," continued the Exotic placidly, "that at that time we had not the pleasure of your acquaintance." The Man of Truth protested in silence.

"Well, I missed the train back."

"But you were in the station," objected Sacharissa on whom the adventure at Shepherd's Bush had not been lost.

"Yes, I know," he admitted, "but I went to sleep on a seat and the others did not wake me."

"That was too bad of them," she said laughing.

The Exotic conceded it with the air of one who has forgiven much and began his narrative. "I was alone in the tiny oasis of safety that cheers the wayfarer in the midst of the all-too-frequented high-road awaiting some convenient vehicle that might assist my return. Several public conveyances had indeed passed, but the appearance of their temporary occupants was so entirely unprepossessing that the contemplation thereof effectually checked any incipient idea I might have entertained of adding myself to their company. Nevertheless, feeling a wish for conversation, I had accosted certain omnibuses that were going in the contrary direction, and had expressed my curiosity as to their ultimate destination. The replies of the officials, though presenting some trifling varieties of diction, were however couched in a strain of monotonous discourtesy.

"I fell to musing; the red sand of the Syrian desert unrolled itself before my inner vision, stretching into dim infinity. The heated air quivered as it rose, distorting the proportions of a distant camel till they loomed grotesque, gigantic. It advanced slowly, its master suffering his careful Bactrian to choose its own pace. Not without reason, as I was to learn, had he won the title of the Con—"

"—scientious Curate?" suggested the Ambassador with an assumption of *naïveté* as he caught the narrator's eye.

"But the dream faded," pursued the Exotic with an air of slight reproach, "and I found myself once more in an English desert, a desert of unlovely buildings and yet unlovelier inhabitants. A small boy interrupted my reverie by some remark, doubtless of a personal nature,

and I meditated despatching him in search of a hansom,—there were none in sight; but, perceiving that my attention had been aroused to the fact of his existence, he misjudged my motives and departed with quite unnecessary suddenness. You can perhaps judge of my desolation and the uncongeniality of my surroundings when I confess that for an instant I thought of getting into a tram car with a substantial female whose baby had been eating marmalade, or even of walking back to the station."

Here, perhaps by way of rivalling the Mime, the Exotic stirred almost sufficiently to endanger the equilibrium of his tea-cup, which despite the anxious glances of Sacharissa he had persisted in balancing on his left knee. The Ambassador deftly removed the cup, and placed it on the table, thereby enabling Sacharissa to smile whole-heartedly with the others.

"I half turned," continued the Exotic, pausing for a moment as if in doubt whether he ought not to suit the action to the word; but the Mime had already done it for him, so he proceeded contentedly. "I was aware that there stood beside me the Conscientious Curate, who carried, or rather poked out before him, a feminine and all too palpably superfluous umbrella."

"What sort of umbrella?" asked Sacharissa innocently.

"The Superfluous Umbrella, of course," the Exotic answered.

"Do you mean the parasol?" the Man of Truth demanded.

The Exotic conceded the point almost curtly.

"But we think you should describe it," suggested the Ambassador with a look to Sacharissa.

"Oh, you must," she insisted,— "that is, if it was a lady's umbrella."

The Exotic drew breath. "Its

handle," he began, "was of mother of pearl that Arab divers rescue from the jealous waves of Bahrein, and of gold for which red-shirted sons of a free race wage stubborn war with nature in the gloomy cañons of California; the silken fabric had been woven in the looms of Ning-Po; chaste white lace, worked by timid novices in the quiet convents of Ghent, served to set off its delicate rose-pink hue, soft as the blush of a maiden at the first kiss of her lover."

At this point the Poet was observed to be feeling for his pencil. The Exotic, therefore, in the hope that it was about to be immortalised, repeated his last sentence again slowly. But apparently the Poet had no such intention, for, finding himself discovered, he gave up the search with a face that unwillingly rivalled the maiden. The Exotic, a trifle disappointed, looked to Sacharissa for approbation. Apparently she was satisfied with the description for she nodded quickly. He went on again.

"The Curate was a singularly perfect specimen of the traditional type complicated by an anxious expression, as his eye travelled from the superfluous umbrella to any passing example of the district's feminine population. It seemed to me that I had an opportunity of doing a good action by assisting his perplexity. I therefore addressed him. 'I perceive that you have been entrusted with my sister's umbrella, on the strength of which inanimate introduction may I claim the privilege of your acquaintance?' 'It is your sister's?' he said and his face brightened. 'What a providential encounter!' He handed it to me at once. 'I have been looking for the owner everywhere,' he added wearily. 'I take it,' I said, 'that you are not known to her personally!'"

"How could he be?" broke in the

Man of Truth. "You haven't a sister."

"As I have already had occasion to remark," returned the Exotic patiently, "this story belongs to a period antecedent to your official existence."

"The sister is evidently—a gold bangle," suggested the Ambassador perceiving that the Man of Truth was about to express himself more fully.

"Please go on," said Sacharissa. The Exotic smiled and obeyed.

"He said he had not been so fortunate; and indeed he scarcely looked as if he knew anybody's sister. Also he murmured something about an appointment with his vicar. In fact, had there not been a number of vehicles in the road, I believe he would have left me at once. I checked him. 'What are you going to do with the umbrella?' I enquired. 'I thought you said it was your sister's,' he protested. 'In which case she would be pleased to thank you herself,' I said. He appeared embarrassed, but I relieved his anxiety. 'As it happens, however, it is not my sister's. Yet I think I can describe to you the owner.' His face expressed a shade of suspicion as I took the superfluous umbrella and turned it round. Its daintiness endeared me to clairvoyance. 'She is tall,' I began, 'and slender of form, sprightly yet graceful. Her eyes smile at you, and her cheeks dimple as the light fancies of girlhood flash upon her. She is merriment and tenderness in one. You are a fortunate man, reverend sir. She will illumine your country parsonage with her sunny radiance. She will cheer your sick and bring the hardened to dream of beauty, raising them out of their sordid lives by the mere presence of her loveliness. She will hang on your words, and inspire you in your work, till your very sermons

are,—that is, exceed their present surpassing excellence. Her name—” the Exotic paused for effect. “Her name is Sacharissa,” he continued seeing that his audience was becoming expectant.

“What did you say her name was?” demanded the Man of Truth with honest indignation.

The Exotic ignored the existence of the interrupter. “The Curate had been getting a little restive,” he explained, “and when I had finished my portrait expressed a desire for more accurate detail. I looked at him; he seemed to have become more conscientious than ever and murmured something about taking it off to the police-station.”

“Why didn’t he take it back where he found it?” asked the Man of Truth.

“Where did he find it?” put in the Mime.

“Yes, where did he?” repeated the Scribe slyly.

The Exotic slightly elevated one eyebrow, possibly in protest, possibly in bewilderment.

“I don’t think we ought to interrupt the story,” said Sacharissa gently.

“But he hasn’t told—” began the Man of Truth. The Ambassador passed him the cigarette-box with an air of determination.

“If,” said the Exotic in a tone of euphonious injury, “if this were a common-place tale of the imagination I could understand a demand for plausible if somewhat mechanical explanations. In actual life I myself once rescued an old gentleman’s hat which was wafted against my feet by the breeze as I was waiting for an opportunity to cross the road without undignified haste; but he has not died and left me his fortune. And a yet more striking example is afforded by an anecdote that was told

to me once as I sojourned at a caravanerai, whose roof had in earlier days sheltered—” The Ambassador coughed warningly. “I will return, however, to the Curate’s proposition, that he should leave the Superfluous Umbrella at the nearest police-station, to which I was compelled to object. ‘Leave,’ I said, ‘leave this in an atmosphere tainted by evil, in a haunt of crime and vice, this delicate trifle to be handled by the unimaginative detective, to be put away on a défilé shelf, perhaps even to be desecrated by a ticket and a number!’ The better to bring home to him the enormity of his suggestion I unfolded the Superfluous Umbrella before his unresponsive gaze. And then I saw that I had been vouchsafed a small but entirely adequate miracle.” The Exotic looked to the Mime to supply the appropriate gesture, this time without success. His effect was marred, and with a touch of melancholy he returned to his narrative.

“The Curate was still unresponsive, but he was concerned and he entered upon some further and still more unsatisfactory suggestion as to the disposal of the Superfluous Umbrella, but I cut him short. ‘Perhaps after all,’ I said, ‘it would be best to take it back to the proper owner.’ The obviousness of this course left him no alternative, but he was not pacified until I gave him the actual name and address, which was, which was—that of a lady in a well-known quarter of the town. Even then I believe he would still have tried to desert me, but I pointed out that the responsibility of restoration lay with the finder, a point which his conscience grasped after a little explanation. So we went there.”

“But how could you have known—” began the Man of Truth.

“There was a silver band lower

down the handle on which all particulars were inscribed," said the Exotic. "I think I remarked that I had opened the Superfluous Umbrella." His tone suggested that the Man of Truth's lack of perspicacity was becoming wearisome. But the Man of Truth was not quite suppressed.

"How did you go?" he asked.

"We went," the Exotic replied in a decided manner.

He paused so long that Sacharissa was compelled to ask if the lady was in.

"She was not, so the butler assured us," continued the Exotic thoughtfully, "but her mother was. The man, however, seemed to want information,—a distressing habit of people of that class—and the Conscientious Curate was too overcome by the magnificence of the edifice to express himself, so I took out my card-case and looked through it. You see, I thought we had better go in because it was about tea-time. Tea makes such an effective setting for a story," he observed irrelevantly.

"You had got as far as the card-case," murmured the Ambassador.

"It was full of cards," pursued the Exotic, "quite a varied assortment. You see I had left home to pay calls."

"In Shepherd's Bush?" asked the Scribe.

The Exotic waived the point. "And just as I was leaving, having discovered that I had used up all my own cards, I picked up a handful from the card-basket, because it is absurd to pay calls without cards; and so I had plenty for our present needs." He continued rather hurriedly because he saw several questions formulating in the face of the Man of Truth, "I picked out an ordinary *Reverend* for the Curate, and selected a *Mr. de Something* for myself, because we had

to impress the butler and there was nobody else of note in the card-case except a bishop and a knight, and the Curate did not wear gaiters and knights are so terribly common and suggest useful commodities, and I was afraid it might lead the conversation round to jam or furniture." He paused to take breath, but he had tided over the awkward interval and the Man of Truth was reduced to astonished silence.

He smiled reassuringly at Sacharissa, who seemed inclined to protest, and continued. "We were ushered into a reception room whose magnificence can only be compared to—" no parallel suggesting itself at the moment he omitted it, "and found ourselves in the presence of a well-favoured and generously - proportioned lady, who received us with some slight surprise. The Conscientious Curate hung back, —I don't think he had quite caught his own name—and I saw that the necessity of opening the conversation devolved on me. I said that we had been so fortunate as to find the umbrella of her sister—"

"Daughter," corrected the Man of Truth.

The Exotic sighed dispiritedly. "The point was so painfully apparent," he murmured. "She, of course, set me right as to the relationship, at which I looked my astonishment." He waved his hand gently in the direction of the Ambassador to indicate the sort of look he meant. "We sat down, and she gave us tea and the most delicious little tea-cakes; but I gathered that she rather wanted to see the umbrella. I of course looked to the Curate; he had not got it. 'We left it outside' I had to say, and indeed we had. Yes, it was lost," he concluded with one eye on the opening mouth of the Man of Truth.

"Oh, dear," cried Sacharissa;

"how in the world did you manage to lose it again?"

"It might have been the Curate," said the Exotic with cryptic lameness, but she would not let him off this time.

"We lost it; I fear that is all that can be said. Had I known," he continued with dignity, "the precise manner of its disappearance, it would naturally not have disappeared. And the Curate nearly got us into difficulties, for I believe he was going to ask me if I had not brought it in with me, only the door opened and she appeared."

"She," repeated Sacharissa, interested, "your Sacharissa?"

"Not mine," returned the Exotic pensively, "the Curate's I think; yes, certainly his."

Sacharissa, not for the first time, began to feel that she was getting a little out of her depth. But seeing the Ambassador bestow an approving smile on the veracious historian she attempted a look of sympathetic comprehension. The Scribe was amused.

"Her mother said all that was necessary," the Exotic continued, "but the Conscientious Curate seemed perturbed. I don't think he quite liked his new name,—so far as I remember it was not very stimulating, but then you see I couldn't make him a bishop without gaiters, could I? He would have had to change, and then we should have been late for tea. However, before he could interrupt, I told her that I had only been acting as guide and that all her thanks were due to him. She was just what she should have been, and she thanked him for all his trouble until he ought to have become quite reconciled to his name and everything else. She said the umbrella was a present and she would not have lost it for worlds. In fact she had advertised for it and offered a reward.

The Curate's conversation was rather of the monosyllabic and protesting order; he really didn't rise to the occasion at all properly,"—there was a note of regret in the Exotic's voice—"but in the presence of Sacharissa it is difficult for anyone to do himself justice," he admitted in the ambassadorial tone.

The Poet nodded his head sagely.

"So I helped him out again. I described a sad case which he had in his parish, that of a poor widow whose husband had been killed on the railway where he was nobly doing his duty in the signal-box as pointsman, and I said how she herself had broken her arm in falling over a wash-tub and could not do her work, and was now starving with her nine children. She became so interested that she ran and fetched her purse and gave him five sovereigns, three for the reward and two for the poor woman, to whom she sent a lot of kind messages. And—can you imagine it?—he actually wanted to be conscientious, though there must have been quite a number of cases like that in his parish. I know a millionaire who gets letters from hundreds of people much worse off every morning." The Exotic looked round for the due astonishment, but could not find it. He returned to his tale in placid surprise. "So I saw there was only one thing to do. I pleaded an important engagement, bade farewell for my friend and myself and took his arm. He pocketed the sovereigns mechanically," the Exotic laid some slight stress on this point, "and I got him half-way down-stairs. But she followed. 'I must see my parasol,' she said gaily. Fortunately the door was already open. 'My friend will be only too happy to show it to you,' I said, leaving him and stepping into the street. There was a hansom passing. I got into it and gave the

driver the address of another man's club. And now may I have a cigarette?" he concluded hurriedly.

There was a considerable silence after the Exotic had finished his tale, and then Sacharissa felt that he needed a rebuke. "Your treatment of the poor man," she said, "was disgraceful."

The Exotic looked at her in innocent wonder. "Why I helped him immensely," he asserted. "He would probably be carrying the umbrella about now if it had not been for me."

Sacharissa looked at the Exotic severely. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she said; "it is a perfect catalogue of crime." She enumerated the points of his story. "You introduce yourself to a harmless stranger under false pretences. You drag him off to the house of another stranger, and take him into it under a false name. You make him tell untruths and accept a reward for a thing he cannot produce, and then instead of trying to help him out of the difficulty you run away, leaving him in the hall to explain." She stopped; words failed her before such a revelation of iniquity.

The Scribe laughed, while the Exotic lay back in his chair with the pained face of one who is misunderstood by an unfeeling world, murmuring, "I got him five pounds anyhow."

"Do you think that a sufficient compensation for the loss of Sacharissa's esteem?" asked the Scribe.

Sacharissa gave a little shudder. "I don't like to think of the poor man at all," she said.

"It was a fine dramatic situation," observed the Mime with relish. "I remember once when I was almost in the same sort of difficulty."

The Scribe purposed to cut short the intended narrative. "How did you get out of it?" he asked.

"I didn't," the Mime answered. "I got out of the window."

The Man of Truth's laugh aroused Sacharissa who had been sitting in an attitude of pretty perplexity. She looked enquiringly at the Ambassador who smiled at her to signify that she had not missed anything.

"I nearly became a curate once," said the Scribe, thinking to make a diversion. Sacharissa glanced at him with interest. "There was a charming old rector I knew who badly wanted a curate. He had a mile of splendid trout-fishing on his glebe, and I badly wanted that, so I thought we might come to an arrangement. But it takes a year of preliminaries to become a curate and he could not wait, so I am still a layman."

Sacharissa betrayed her disappointment so visibly that the Scribe hastened to add in a consoling tone: "I dare say it's just as well. I should not have made a good curate."

The thought did not appease her. "That makes it all the worse, I think," she said reprovingly.

The Scribe assumed an air of dejected humility and addressed the Exotic with a sad smile. "The relation of our sufferings does not even meet with sympathy."

Sacharissa shook her head at them. "I am sure I've given you all you deserve," she said. "But I've still a little left," she laughed, glancing at the Ambassador.

The Man of Truth took upon himself to interpret. "That means it's your turn," he said to the Ambassador with satisfaction.

The Ambassador relieved Sacharissa's slight confusion by answering her glance. "I fear I can advance no claim," he said. "My experiences would not be worthy of your attention, in fact I think I have had none. But experience always comes," he

added with a polite and expressive bow. Sacharissa's gaze left his face very swiftly and concentrated itself on the tea-pot.

The Poet at this moment discovered a ball of paper under the cushion of his chair. He smoothed it out and found that it was his poem. "I wonder," he began doubtfully, "if you would care to have it. I am afraid it is rather crumpled."

Sacharissa was pleased. "Thank you so much," she said; "I should indeed." She took it and read it. "I am afraid that Sacharissa, if that is her name, treated you very badly," she pronounced with a smile.

The Poet became confused. "Oh no, she treated me very well,—that is, she hasn't treated me at all—that is, I mean—"

The Ambassador kept an eye on the Man of Truth while he rescued the Poet. "A poet's woes are also his pleasures," he said, "because they give him inspiration, therefore I don't think you should waste too much of your reserve of sympathy on him."

"Perhaps not," smiled Sacharissa; "but at any rate I am sure the poem is much too good for her."

The Poet was in deep water at once. "Oh," he said gratefully, "I am so glad you think so. I mean nothing could be too good for her. That is, I should say—"

"He doesn't know what he means," said the Man of Truth, vaguely realising that the Poet was in difficulties and needed help. His effort was successful and the slight awkwardness passed in laughter. He glanced at the Ambassador with pride.

That gentleman was now on his

feet deploring the necessity for instant departure if the train was to be caught. The party was already moving when Sacharissa detained him by a slight gesture. "Oh," she said, "I only wanted to remind you to come quite early next week and"—she hesitated a moment; then she raised her eyes and looked full at him. "Who is Sacharissa?"

The Ambassador hesitated too. "A fancy of one of my friends," he began and paused; but it was better that she should be told. "I hope you will be able to forgive us, but in fact I have the honour of addressing Sacharissa at this moment."

The Man of Truth, who happened to be looking back, had a vision of the Ambassador bowing very low, and of Sacharissa standing with the sunset in her face.

The Ambassador followed the others, and as he reached the rosary he heard a light step behind him and a voice which said, "Please thank your friend for the pretty name."

He turned but could only catch a glimpse of drapery vanishing behind the roses and could only hear a low musical laugh.

He came up with the others at the bridge.

"I saw her blush," observed the Man of Truth when he reached them.

"She asked who Sacharissa was," explained the Ambassador.

"Did you tell her?" asked the Scribe.

"I did," he replied.

"Was she very angry?" enquired the Poet nervously.

"Not very, I think," answered the Ambassador.

(To be continued.)

A CHAPTER IN OLD PORTUGUESE HISTORY.

IN the library of the British Museum, among other publications on the subject, may be seen a somewhat curious old street-ballad, printed in Valencia, with the title *TRUE ACCOUNT OF THE MELANCHOLY HISTORY OF DOÑA IÑES DE CASTRO (HERON'S NECK) OF PORTUGAL*. It must be read for the simplicity rather than the truthfulness of its jingling verse. On its first page is a barbarous and inexpensive wood-cut of a headless lady seated upon a chair, with a fountain of blood shooting upwards from her neck. To the right of her is a man with a knife, and to the left another man holding aloft the severed head. In his opening lines the humble rhymester does not mind playing a little upon the traditional term *Heron's Neck* which, in token of her dignified deportment, was applied to poor Iñez. "I entreat the queen of heaven," he says, "that I may have the loan of a quill from one of her wings to enable my genius to describe the inhuman cruelty which incited to tears of pity statues of both bronze and marble." He concludes with the like exuberance: "The homicidal tyrant came to her seated in a chair with her hands tied behind her . . . and the brutal knife cut her lovely throat. . . . Thus died Doña Iñez de Castro. God gave her soul glory and enrolled her for evermore in the ranks of the celestial nymphs." In the woodcut Iñez is shown with her hands in her lap instead of behind her. It is thus abundantly plain that, in matters of detail, the Valencia ballad cannot be trusted.

But there is indeed much that is dubious even in the better accredited versions of Iñez's life and death and subsequent exhumation. Camoens has done his best to make her memory immortal, yet in his account of the coronation of the corpse he seems to have taken the full licence of a poet in pinning his faith to the Spanish narrative of Faria y Souza rather than to the far more trustworthy, if balder, Portuguese chronicle of Fernao Lopes. One would willingly see the broken-hearted Don Pedro thus crown his wronged wife, even after death, and the nobles in succession bend the knee to her as they kissed her bloodless hand and swore she was truly their queen. It is an incident sufficiently medieval and by no means out of keeping with the character of Don Pedro as he is limned for us in the chronicles. But the evidence is too weak. With reluctance one is disposed to believe that no such tremendous function preceded that gloomy seventeen-league march with the confined Iñez from Coimbra to Alcobaça, over hills and through pine forests as thick now as in A.D. 1355, by the light of a hundred thousand torches. They had seen no funeral procession to equal it in those days, and one may safely say that it has not yet been rivalled for its sombre magnificence.

The strong interest of the tragedy all centres about Don Pedro, first as heir apparent and later as king of Portugal. Iñez is for us little else than a beautiful and confiding woman to whom her lord's will was law. She was of good Spanish blood, cousin

to Don Pedro himself and came to the Portuguese court with her father to escape the ill usage of the tyrannical king of Spain. The Prince lost his heart to her and married her at Bragança, the prior of Guarda performing the ceremony. This churchman and the Prince's servant, Estevan Lobato, seem to have been the only disinterested witnesses of the marriage, which was thenceforward kept a secret with fatal scrupulousness. Iñez was placed by her lord in a house on the south side of the Mondego, with Coimbra, the capital of the realm, scarcely more than a bow-shot away on the opposite bank of the pale blue stream. The situation was convenient. The royal convent of Santa Clara was close at hand, where dwelt King Alfonso the Fourth with his court. When the King hunted, the Prince was free to enjoy the society of his Iñez unquestioned; and when the Prince hunted it was easy to rest before or after the chase in the lovely gardens and by the fountains of the house on the Mondego. The legend flows (like the crystal clear runlet itself) that at other times Iñez was wont to send loving messages to her lord in little toy boats carried by the current of the watercourse into the precincts of the royal convent. It may well have been so. Still, as in 1350, the living water gushes from the rocky cave of the Fonte dos Amores, and in a tiny cemented channel part of it speeds towards the convent. This however has long gone from its high estate. Its church alone survives ignobly. The mud of the Mondego's inundations, century after century, has raised the level of the ground half as high as the church porch. It is in fact no church now. Carpenters saw wood in the workshop they have raised in its aisle. An indifferent eating-house, the Buen Retiro de

Santa Clara, presses it closely to the north, with vine-clad arbours in its tangled garden of pot-herbs and orange trees. There are mills near of a size that would not discredit Stockport, and the young ladies of the factory loll about and make remarks that are not at all romantic. The lichens, weeds, and ivy on the convent church are also witnesses to its downfall. But that pellucid little brook still hurries hitherwards, as if it had a special mission to perform far more important than the swelling of Mondego's classic flood.

Though only in the early twenties of his age the Prince was already a widower when he thus secretly wedded the fair Iñez. His father wished for nothing better than to have a second daughter-in-law, to whom he might look with hope for a secured continuance of his royal line. But there was no assurance in the court that Iñez was more to the Prince than a mistress. It was only natural therefore that they should seek to eclipse her happiness by attempting to arrange an orthodox second alliance for the heir apparent. For such a purpose Doña Blanca, the sister of the King of Navarre, seemed very suitable, and negotiations were accordingly opened with the King of Navarre.

One does not know exactly how far these proceedings went on the road to maturity. The Spanish ballad - writer certainly romances bravely in bringing the Prince and Doña Blanca together and in making him declare, with no regard for the lady's feelings, that he is already so content in a wife of his own choice that "there can be no happiness in the world to equal mine, and therefore Your Highness may return at once to Navarre." From this same source we learn that, to avenge his sister's humiliation and sad tears of

disappointment, the King of Navarre sounded his trumpets, called his captains together and marched direct for Lisbon, which he besieged. It is a considerable cry from Navarre to Lisbon, even in these days of the *Sud-Express*. In the fourteenth century locomotion, with or without an army, was more difficult still in this peninsula of mountains, separate principalities, and very troublesome rivers. Still, it is much to get hold of something like an adequate motive for the royal assent to the murder of Iñez, and, granting that Alfonso was seriously embarrassed by the presence of alien troops about the walls of his city on the Tagus and believed the sacrifice would save his crown, the deed was not one of unexampled ferocity. But, alas for the probabilities, Lisbon was not then the capital of Portugal, though undoubtedly it was at the later date when the Spanish ballad-monger wrote. If the King of Navarre had rung his warlike clarions in the neighbourhood of Coimbra, it would have been much more to the point.

We must fall back on the more conventional pretexts for the murder. The Spanish influence (a most undesirable thing) was feared by King Alfonso's courtiers as the outcome of the prince's infatuation. Iñez was of course not without relations who looked to her for aggrandisement in the time of her own supremacy. Her power over her lord was immense and it seemed likely to outlast even her beauty, for Don Pedro's temperament was not of the fickle kind. This spelled mischief, if not ruin, for many of the native barons. And so siege was laid to poor Iñez in the mind of the King, who was entreated in the interests of the realm to banish her at least, if he would not positively kill her. Of these enviroing snares and schemes the Prince appears to

have been fondly unconscious, or if conscious neglectful, for a certain time. His happiness cannot be questioned if we may believe (as we readily may) that he wrote the fragments of verse preserved as his in the medieval *Cancionero*. "You are worthier to be served," runs one morsel, "than any lady in this base world; you are my second divinity; you are my joy in this life; you are she whom I love for her merits."

After this, Camoens in *THE LUSIAD* has surely full permission to make the most of Don Pedro's affection for Iñez. The measure of his success may be seen even in translation, than which none can be better than Sir Richard Burton's.

He placed thee, fair Iñes! in soft
retreat,
Culling the firstfruits of thy sweet
young years,
In that delicious dream, that dear
deceit,
Whose long endurance Fortune hates
and fears:
Hard by Mondego's yearned-for
meads thy seat,
Where linger, flowing still, those
lovely tears,
Until each hill-born tree and shrub
confest
The name of him deep writ within
thy breast.

There, in thy Prince awoke responsive-
wise
Dear thoughts of thee which soul-
deep ever lay;
Which brought thy beauteous form
before his eyes,
Whene'er those eyne of thine were
far away:
Night fled in falsest, sweetest phan-
tasies,
In fleeting, flying reveries sped the
day;
And all, in fine, he saw or cared to see
Were memories of his love, his joys,
his thee.

It does not matter very much if the original house in which the Prince enshrined his darling has long since

disappeared. The site remains. The dark cedars by the side of the streamlet in the garden are now giants of their kind, about a hundred and eighty feet high, unrivalled in Portugal and perhaps in the world. But though these to the romantic visitor are pregnant with gloom and suitable suggestion, in Don Pedro's time they were not the prodigious hearse-plumes they are now. And the glorious sunlight of the south, with the green slopes, the tree-clad hills, and the purple summits of the Estrellas away to the east over Mondego's valley, were surely as joyful and hope-inspiring to the wedded lovers as they are to the most matter-of-fact tourist of our day. Coimbra was of course not the gay climbing city of many colours it now is; but its brown church-towers, its convents and surrounding walls must have made a beguiling picture for their comfort, whether actually or mirrored tremulously before them in the gliding river. Few places have so enchanting a position as Coimbra; and no bower could have yielded to poor Iñez more felicity, assuming, as we must, that her lord was always kind. And yet it was her lord who caused her death. Don Pedro would not declare openly that he was married to her. His father wished to honour her as the Crown Princess of Portugal; but Don Pedro would not give him the right to do so. Was he jealous of the public eye to which then, almost of need, his lovely wife would have to be exposed? One may hope so. It seems the most charitable reading of his stubbornness. But, on the other hand, by the light of common human nature (princely or otherwise), it were easy to see in Don Pedro's conduct, from the privacy of his marriage onwards, motives of downright brutality. The hint may suffice. And, truly, if we

do not wrong him in this, no man was ever more bitterly chastised for the remote contemplation of future and unworthy pleasure by the abrupt and tragic extinction of his present bliss.

Now, at any rate, the Prince ought to have prepared for a duel to the death with his (that is his wife's) enemies at the court. The Queen, his mother, the Archbishop of Braga (then Primate in Spain) and many of the nobles warned him that his lady's life was in peril. Yet he declined to act on their advice and put Iñez in a safe place,—if such might indeed be found. He took no precautions and continued silent about his marriage, declaring to his father's envoys that the subject displeased him. And so the King was persuaded that for the good of the realm the fair Spaniard must die. For this purpose he came to Coimbra and the convent of Santa Clara, almost within call of Iñez in her garden. He went in person to his daughter-in-law, accompanied by the knights who were to murder her, choosing a time when his son was hunting. This, one infers, was his first and last sight of Iñez. She, perceiving her doom, won on the King's pity with her tears as well as her loveliness so that Alfonso left her with a changed mind. Outside, however, his courtiers regained the mastery over him and convinced him that the deed ought to be done. The actual assassins seem to have been Alvar Gonçalves and Pedro Coelho, though Diego Pacheco was also a chief counsellor of the act, and was therefore subsequently bracketed with the two for the dire vengeance sworn by the Prince. They killed her, so the story goes, like butchers. Thenceforward the spot was consecrated to the memory of her tears as well as of her love. The somewhat smug white villa now here, approached

by a short avenue to which access is allowed by the liveried servant at the lodge, is the Quinta das Lagrimas, the House of Tears.

We are told that when Don Pedro returned from the chase and found Iñez thus barbarously slaughtered his rage was extreme almost to madness. It was no wonder, in the circumstances. Whichever way he looked at the tragedy, he had cause for self-upbraidings; and we know from the subtle mind of Shakespeare that wounds self-administered are apt to resist the healing art. He buried his much-wronged lady and took up arms against his father, whom, of course rightly, he made responsible for the crime. This same year, 1355, the Black Death visited Portugal as the rest of Europe. Its grisly favours might by Don Pedro's unbalanced mind well have been viewed as a celestial vengeance on his behalf. He made hot haste to support the plague in vexing his father and the realm. The next two years were passed in this civil war. The Prince does not seem to have performed any great feats of arms. He ravaged the smiling lands of Minho, where vineyards and cheerful brooks and meadows fill the valleys and the pine-clad hills are fantastic with rocks. But there was no battle in which the armoured knights of father and son could meet and appeal decisively to heaven to declare in the issue which of the two had been wronged the more. Don Pedro besieged Oporto and found it troublesome. Eventually the politic Archbishop of Braga intervened, and a sort of peace was arranged. The King gave his son the right to administer justice in his name,—a bad omen for the murderers of Iñez. No sooner was this settled than Alfonso fell mortally ill at Lisbon, and died. But before dying, with a certain fairness for which kings

have not always been remarkable, he summoned Gonçalves, Coelho, and Pacheco, the three men most concerned in the murder of Iñez, and advised them to leave Portugal at once. They fled to Spain as if the point of Don Pedro's sword was already pressing their backs.

The new King was thirty-seven when he began to reign. Iñez had been dead two years. She lay at peace in the convent church of Santa Clara, and there she lay tranquilly four years more, while the monks sang dirges on behalf of her white soul and the King moved heaven and earth to get possession of her assassins. Don Pedro the First is known in history as the Severe. We at this date must accept with moderate thankfulness the popular summary of him. The chronicles do not portray him as an insufferable monster, even though he did carry an executioner with him wherever he went, and wore a whip in his girdle as methodically as a modern gentleman wears a collar. Executioners were very necessary appanages of a court in the fourteenth century. As for the whip, even if Don Pedro did wield it in person on the shoulders of criminals, though possibly he lowered his royal dignity in the act, we may ascribe his energy at least as much to his furious hatred of evil-doing, and therefore of malefactors, as to ingrained brutality. He did not at any rate, like his namesake the Cruel of Spain, kill for the mere killing's sake, nor did he shoe men as if they were horses. It is recorded that he flogged with his own hands an adulterous bishop of Oporto, but until he got his feet on the necks of Messieurs Gonçalves and Coelho, this is the worst act of his that we can record.

On the other hand, he was liberal, just (if severe), absurdly fond of dancing, and a stammerer. He coined

much gold,—a pursuit in which his royal successor of to-day would be charmed if he could to follow his example. As he capered through the realm, he distributed ornaments of gold and silver with exceeding lavishness. To his servants he was incomparable, for he raised their wages without being asked to do so. Further, he continued fond of the chase, though there was only one hunt of which he never grew tired until the quarry was at his feet. The dance was a mania with him, and, reading of his achievements in this particular, one is reluctantly tempted to believe those who avow that he was mad from the day of Iñez's death. He delighted to stand up before the eyes of his subjects in the streets of his cities and pirouette like a mountebank. He caused silver trumpets to be fashioned specially to accompany him in his beloved folly. When he made a royal procession through the realm, he expected to be met outside the walls of his cities by the principal persons, with whom he straightway danced, and thus dancing he arrived at his lodging for the night. There were times when he could not sleep (for thinking of Iñez, perchance); then he would bid them sound his silver trumpets, light torches, and prepare for a dance. He thus danced through the night,—not in the privacy of his royal apartments, but on the roads outside the towns. And so about daybreak he would return soothed to the palace. He must have been a puzzle to his liege subjects. One of the events of his reign was the famous feat of arms of Don João Alfonso Tello in the open space now known as the Rocio, whence the tram-cars in our century start for all parts of Lisbon. Here they roasted whole oxen and prepared barrels of wine and mountains of bread for the people throughout the festival.

And hither one night during the tournament the King came dancing like a mad creature through the streets, having caused five thousand men to form an avenue for him across the city, each holding a waxen taper. It must have been a spectacle worth looking at from the windows of the gabled houses on either side. No wonder the people trembled who stood as criminals before this same eccentric monarch, with a whip in his hand instead of dancing pumps on his feet.

But the fragments of his poetry show us what was in his mind all this time, whether his levity was heartfelt or spurious.

He who has killed you, lady, needs the mighty protection of fate and the stars.

Those mortal wounds given to you for my sake have stricken two lives in ending one.

Yours, guiltless, is already over, and mine, which lingers still, will be ever filled with the anguish of grievous recollection.

Oh fearful cruelty! Injustice monumental! Was there ever in all Spain so barbarous and sad a death?

The fidelity of my heart shall be a wonder to the world. Since you are thus dead, I will be as the turtle dove bereaved of its mate.

Rest in peace, lady, for I survive you in this world. If I live, your death shall be well avenged. For this purpose I continue to live; else it were better, lady, that I had died at once with you.

What ails me? Where am I wounded, lady? It is I who have slain you and your death has slain me. Blood of my heart, oh heart that was mine, who could thus have mutilated you without cause? From him will I tear out his own heart.

Only in the fourth year of his reign did Don Pedro determine publicly to settle the national mind in the matter of his marriage with Iñez. He then held a great court at Coimbra and on the Gospels swore to the marriage in the presence of his barons. The

Bishop of Guarda also testified to it. Afterwards his Chancellor, the Count of Barcellos, formally addressed the nation there assembled in its representatives,—the people, the nobles and the clergy—in these words, preserved for us by Fernao Lopes :

Friends, you must know that the King our lord has received Doña Iñez de Castro for his lawful wife, and since it is the King's will that this should not be hidden, he has commanded me to inform you of it that you may withdraw suspicion from your minds and that it may be known explicitly; but if, in spite of this, some of you may still doubt because of the degree of consanguinity existing between them, she being the cousin of our lord the King, he has commanded me further to show you this bull obtained when he was Prince and in which the Pope gives him a dispensation to marry any woman he pleases, however near in blood.

The disinterment of Iñez and (if we may believe the poets) the futile swearing of homage to the dead body followed. The march to Alcobaca, where a superb tomb was prepared for her, completed Don Pedro's endeavours to atone for the neglect that had been her portion.

In the meantime the full fruits of his vengeance were also ready for the King. Gonçales and Coelho were, after much negotiation and in defiance of oaths, sent bound into Portugal from Castille, and Don Pedro welcomed them with terrible joy at Santarem, then as now famous for its bold situation on a rock above the Tagus, its churches and its strong walls. Santarem's streets are dark and narrow, and its black-gowned students, poring over their books in its thoroughfares, do not seem burdened with a sense of the blithe gift of youth. One may suppose that the spirit of Don Pedro in his worst moments has tainted the place in spite of its beauty. The

King hastened to charge the knights with their crime, and then tortured them with his own hand. They refused to confess their guilt, and Don Pedro lashed Coelho across the face with his whip. This brutality had effect, though not of the desired kind. Coelho hurled epithets at his tormentor, as if, resigned to the worst, he meant at least not to go out of life with the stigma of craven upon him. "Bring onions and vinegar to season this hare!" (*coelho*—a hare) cried the King, laughing, and then they tore out Coelho's heart from the front and that of Gonçales from the back—"all of which was done horribly because of the lack of practice." Afterwards the bodies were burnt in the sight of the people, and the King ate and drank gaily while he looked on at the spectacle. Pacheco was fortunate enough to escape such treatment. He broke from his guards and kept his liberty until the King's death six years later. We are told that Don Pedro lost much in the popular esteem because of the manner of the execution. But it was all done for love of Iñez. On his deathbed also he remembered her, and Pacheco, whom he now expressly pardoned for his share in the murder, which was not an active one. And so, six years after that memorable procession from Coimbra to Alcobaca, another procession went north to the same bourne, and they laid the King in a tomb as splendid as his wife's.

There are few objects in Portugal so interesting as these twin monuments in the chapel at Alcobaca. Each is about eleven feet long by five in height, and the sculpture is marvellous for its delicacy and minuteness of detail. They stand foot to foot, so that on the resurrection day the husband may look first of all upon his wife, who now lies calm in

effigy on the top of her tomb, crowned and supported by six charming little stiff-winged angels. Six sphinxes with monkish faces bear up the tomb of Iñez, and six lions do as much for the King, whose massive bearded form in stone appears far too heavy for the six small angels who have charge of him. Both monuments are so superb in their workmanship that one could almost regret that they are left in the dim chapel appointed for them five and a half centuries ago. They are a sight worthy of Europe, but the wheezy sacristan seldom unlocks their chapel-bars for the stranger.

The spirit of decay is upon this vast Cistercian establishment of Alcobaca, once the largest in the world. Its acres of russet roofing no longer shelter monks but soldiers,—little men with long swords. Its cloisters, still amazing for the exuberance and elfishness of their capitals, are crumbling. Weeds have taken root in the crannies of the chiselled stones and they are allowed to push on the destruction already decreed by the dread triumvirate of time, damp and shameful contempt. The beautiful fabric of the church itself is still strong to endure for an indefinite number of centuries; but within are the green damp on its pavement, the tapestry of cobwebs pendant from its lofty unstained windows, and the ghastly spectacle of its mouldering altars, their gilded columns and pediments reeling or fallen to the ground. The tombs of Iñez de Castro and Don Pedro in the heart of this saddening ruin are like two white lilies hale and lovely in a flower garden blasted by the breath of some foul factory.

During the French invasion Alcobaca suffered with the rest of Portugal. The invaders were vexed to find that the monks had not secreted treasure with Iñez's body, from which an enthusiast contented himself with

severing a tress of hair, which was subsequently exhibited in Paris. Senhor Corvalho, who then saw the body, declared that it was perfectly preserved and bore indications of great beauty, though the skin had become like brown velvet. He describes it as clad in a long blue robe and a red half-tunic. We may almost be grateful to France that her sons did not leave a worse mark of their presence in Alcobaca.

With Iñez and her husband in this dim chapel lie three of their children, in beautiful small tombs. Their eldest son, João, rests in Salamanka, and his dismal history, so grim an echo of his father's in one particular, demands a few words. When Don Pedro died he was succeeded on the throne by the son of his first marriage, whose wife was Doña Leonor Telles. This lady's sister, Doña Maria Telles, a youthful widow, was wooed by João, the son of Iñez and Don Pedro, and therefore the King's half-brother. He was an audacious youth and she a discreet lady; she would not, the chronicle says, give him his will save in marriage. And so they were married secretly, like his mother. Their happiness too was extreme for a time. Then the queen began to scheme against her sister, wishing to ally João with her own daughter, that the crown might continue in her family, for Fernando the King was sickly and without a son. She persuaded João that his wife was an adúlteress, though in truth she loved him as fondly as Iñez had loved Don Pedro. Even then João held back from the vile end towards which the Queen was urging him. He yielded at last, however, and, taking armed men with him, he broke into his wife's room at Coimbra one morning early. The lady, we are told, leaped from bed with nothing

round her save the coverlet and stood against the arras protesting her innocence and her shame to be seen thus by his knights. But the ancestral evil was in Don João. Paying no heed to her protestations, he snatched the coverlet from her so that she fell naked on the floor before all the men, and he stabbed her between the shoulder and the breast. "Mother of God," she cried, "help me and take pity on this soul!" Then her husband stabbed her again and, having cried "Jesus son of the Virgin, help me!" she died choked with blood. It was this miserable murder that brought Don João to his end in Spain. The Queen deceived him about his new bride and he found himself pursued in deadly vendetta by his step-son and brother-in-law. He breathed his last, a hunted exile, instead of King of Portugal.

The Coimbra students, their portfolios brightly tied with yellow or red silk ribbons, come singing or smoking down the steep narrow alley of the city with the Telles palace on one side of it. But they do not think so much about the tragedy which took place in this house of golden-tinted stone, with the ponderously ornate portal, as about the tender romance preceding that other tragedy in the white house on the opposite side of the river, far below them. Probably a couple of hundred sonnets a year are written by the Coimbra undergraduates on the theme of Iñez de Castro,—but not printed, and it may safely be left to

them to keep the memory of Iñez green for generations yet to come.

So long ago as 1360 (but five years after the murder) the Coimbra authorities on formal parchment described the fountain in the garden as *Fonte dos Amores*, making it a penal offence to injure the conduit running thence to the convent of Santa Clara. This was done of course in the interest of the royal thirst, not as a tribute to the romance. The other day I found a stout washerwoman wringing clothes in this same fountain, under the shadow of the tall cedars so black against the cloudless heavens. "What! you dare so behave yourself?" exclaimed my guide, the steward in charge of the house, when we came upon the industrious lady squatting by the water-side. A wordy argument ensued and finally the washerwoman took up her clothes and departed. This prohibition, it seems fair to suppose, was decreed solely on behalf of the romance. And yet the man merely laughed while we discussed it; a tragedy more than five centuries old was not worth remembering under that dancing June sunlight, with the fragrance of orange-blossom in the air, the musical murmur of the little conduit at our feet and the purple *Estrellas* so fair to see in the east, high over the pale blue Mondego gliding rapidly beneath Coimbra's terraced houses of blue, white and crimson, and its many church towers, all crowned by the noble university on the hill-top.

CHARLES EDWARDES.

THE SCOTT GALLERY.

WE are indebted to Messrs. Jack, the well known Edinburgh publishers, and to Mr. J. L. Caw, the curator of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, for a work which no lover of Sir Walter Scott who can afford to purchase it should allow himself to want. In his review of Boswell's *LIFE OF JOHNSON*, Macaulay says that Croker the editor has at least this claim to his gratitude that he has induced him to read the book again. For our own part we need no inducement to read the Waverley novels over again, but if any incentive had been wanting we should have found it in those two portfolios. Among the portrait galleries of the world this collection, we should say, is almost unique. All the characters are intended to illustrate the life and works of one man, a life which in the whole long history of British worthies has scarcely a parallel. The circle represented by these portraits, of which Scott was the centre, was composed of materials as various as they were splendid, and covering the widest field of human interests with which any single individual has ever had the fortune to be identified. It is difficult to imagine a more delightful existence than that which these names recall to us, the life at Abbotsford when Scott was at the height of his prosperity, and his horizon was without a cloud. Then were seen, as has seldom if ever been seen either before or since, the highest intellectual brilliancy, all the charms of art and literature, all that men of the greatest political and legal eminence could add to such a banquet,

mingled with the simpler pleasures of rural life and sylvan sport, to be exchanged only at close of day for the company of high-bred accomplished women, and all the gaieties of a witty and vivacious, but cultured and refined society.

There is of course an earlier portion of Scott's life, his childhood passed at Smailholme and Sandy Knowe, and his residence at Lasswade and Ashiestiel, which has a claim on our attention apart from the maturer glories of Abbotsford, and makes us pause over the engravings which accompany the portraits with peculiar interest. It was at Smailholme that the seed was sown of that passionate love for the legends of the Scottish Border which determined the bent of Scott's genius, and led him to the springs from which he drew all his most characteristic inspirations. As we look at the old ruined tower perched on a rocky eminence we can see the boy gazing from it over the wide prospect, and revolving in his mind all the tales of Border foray which the "aged hind" poured into his ear, or the Jacobite stories, not omitting the cruelties of Cumberland with which the Border yeoman who had been out in the Forty-five still further fed his imagination. At Lasswade and Ashiestiel amid scenery fit for a poet and a lover as Scott then was, the seed began to bear fruit. In *THE EVE OF ST. JOHN*, written at Mertoun House close to Lasswade, the lady looks down from Smailholme tower,

Over Tweed's fair flood and Mertoun's
wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

The cottage at Lasswade is drawn as it was when Scott lived in it, before any alterations had been made. It is a simple thatched building, where, however, Scott received many distinguished guests with the unostentatious elegance observed by Stoddart. The move to Ashiestiel took place in 1804, and here Scott found himself in a house more resembling "a gentleman's seat." Here he wrote most of his three great poems and the opening chapters of *Waverley*. He quitted Ashiestiel with deep regret in 1812, but he carried away with him all that was destined to immortalise it, and when he settled at Abbotsford was fully equipped for the great work of his life.

Of the numerous portraits and busts of Sir Walter which are here exhibited the majority are familiar to the public. There is one, however, a drawing by Crombie done in 1831, which is little known, and represents Scott as he was during his last years. It must, however, be very like what he was early in 1827 when he was visited by Dr. and Mrs. Gilly, of whom the latter died only a few years ago, and has often described to the present writer the appearance of Scott as he came out to meet them. The Doctor, a Prebendary of Durham, was a middle-aged man. His wife who was very pretty was much his junior, so that Sir Walter when he saw her cried out in some surprise, "Why, she is quite a young thing." The drawing by Crombie gives Sir Walter as the lady beheld him.

The portrait by Raeburn, done in 1808, prefixed to Lockhart's *Life*, and that by Sir Thomas Laurence in 1820 are probably the two best. But Chantry's bust and Leslie's half-length (painted for Ticknor in 1824) were always regarded by the family as the only likenesses of him which preserved

the expression most familiar to themselves. A pretty picture is one of the Scott family masquerading as peasants of the date of 1817, the Misses Scott bare-footed and carrying milking pails, and Scott and Adam Fergusson in the knee-breeches and gaiters common to the yeomen of the period. In "Scott and his Literary friends at Abbotsford" we have an assemblage of portraits which are given separately elsewhere. They are only part of the brilliant circle which surrounded him.

As we propose to confine these remarks to such portraits as illustrate in some manner Scott's life and character we need say nothing of Byron, Moore, or Rogers, of Southey or Wordsworth, or of any others whom we associate with Scott rather on literary than social grounds, and of course neither of these two portfolios include a tithe of the distinguished men who were casual visitors at Abbotsford, and whose names are scattered up and down the pages of Lockhart. We shall begin with his earliest friend William Clerk of Eldon, the original of Darsie Latimer in *REDGAUNTLET*. Scott and he, like Alan and Darsie, pursued their studies together; they passed their Scotch law trials on the same day, and put on their gowns on the same 11th of July, 1792, after which ceremony Clerk formed one of the guests at old Mr. Scott's table when the newly called Advocate gave his "bit snack of dinner" on the occasion. As we look at his portrait to-day, painted when he was an old man, we see a rather broad but very sagacious Scottish countenance in which traces may be detected of a capacity for mirth and humour without which he never could have formed one of that joyous company who with Scott for their leader rambled over the country far and wide in quest of antiquities.

They must have stumbled upon many a Meg Dods and Mrs. Mac-Candlish in the course of their wanderings; and it was Clerk who told Scott that when his grandfather carried some English visitors to see a supposed Roman camp, and pointed out what he thought the Prætorium, a herdsman who stood by exclaimed in the words of Edie Ochiltree, "Prætorium here, Prætorium there, I made it with a flaughten spade."

But the companion with whom his later excursions into the recesses of Liddesdale were undertaken was Robert Shortreed of whom we have only a silhouette, representing a round bullet-head and a good-looking profile, indicative of resolution with a taste for what the Baron of Bradwardine called "a modest hilarity." It was with Shortreed that Scott visited the farmer who surprised them at first by the very limited supply of liquor that was placed on the table, and who, in the middle of the after-supper prayers, rose suddenly from his knees exclaiming in a loud voice, "By G—d here's the keg"; and conviviality was then kept up to the dawn of day. We have of course no portraits of Scott's hosts on these occasions, but one of them, Willie Elliot of Milburnholm, was, we are assured by Mr. Shortreed, the original of Dandie Dinmont; but of this we shall have more to say presently. One incident which happened at Milburnholm brings us very near to Charlies-hope. The inmates were at first rather awestricken at the rank of their guest when informed that he was an Advocate, just as Mrs. Dinmont and the maidservant were at receiving a live captain of Dragoons. Another anecdote of those days brings us equally near to Rob Roy. At a drinking-bout in the hills prolonged to a very late hour Scott fell asleep, and when he awoke was persuaded that he had sung a song, the same

trick which was played on Francis Osbaldeston.

Scott continued his visits to Liddesdale with the same companion for seven years; but at the same time he was extending his knowledge of the Highlands, which he visited again with Clerk and Adam Fergusson in 1793. His first visit, when he was only fifteen, it does not come within the scope of this paper to describe, but it must have suggested many things in WAVERLEY and ROB ROY. Adam (afterwards Sir Adam) Fergusson was one of Scott's most intimate friends with whom much of his early life was spent. He entered the army later on and served in the Peninsular War. Retiring in 1816 he took up his abode at Huntly Burn close to Abbotsford, greatly to Scott's delight, who now had one of his oldest friends so near a neighbour as to admit of almost daily intercourse. The portrait here given represents a very pleasant kindly countenance, not devoid of shrewdness, and lighted up with a genial smile. With him Scott visited Tullybody the seat of the Abercrombys, and the owner, the father of the famous Sir Ralph Abercrombie, told Scott how in his early youth he had visited Rob Roy in just such a cavern as was inhabited by Donald Bean Lean, and dined, just as Waverley dined, on collops fresh cut from some of his own cattle which he recognised hanging up by their heels. Whether Fergusson accompanied him to Glamis is not distinctly stated. But it was during the same tour that Scott visited the fine old castle and saw the *poculum potatorium* of the family, a silver-gilt goblet moulded into the shape of a lion and holding an English pint, which Scott confesses that he emptied as Waverley drained the Blessed Bear of Bradwardine.

Fergusson of course was a prominent figure at all "superior occa-

sions" of which at Abbotsford there were several. The chief was the Abbotsford Hunt and the dinner afterwards at which Scott was chairman, and Fergusson croupier, when over the toddy and the punch he regaled his hearers with tales of Busaco and Torres Vedras, winding up perhaps with THE LAIRD OF COCKPEN. The captain was married in the year 1821, and Scott says there was nothing like it since the days of Lismahago. "The captain, like his prototype, advanced in a jaunty military step with a kind of leer on his face that seemed to quiz the whole affair." There is little in the captain's exterior, or in his good-humoured genial countenance, to remind one of Smollett's poor lieutenant who is a sort of companion character to Commodore Trunnion. But Fergusson seems to have thought it necessary to comport himself at his wedding in a style which might really have been borrowed from that hero.

Another very early friend was Lord Chief Commissioner Adam, whose bust, now in the possession of Mrs. Maxwell Scott, does not convey exactly the same impression of the man that Lockhart's description leaves behind it, though both may be equally true. The bust represents a massive head and countenance with a stern expression about the mouth and eyes as of one accustomed to deal with prevaricating witnesses. But Lockhart says he was "the only man he ever knew that rivalled Sir Walter Scott in uniform graciousness of *bonhomie* and gentleness of humour." He was President of the Jury Court in Scotland and spent a great deal of his time at his country seat in Kinross-shire. "Here about midsummer, 1816, he received a visit from his near relation William Clerk, Adam Fergusson, his hereditary friend and special favourite, and their life long

intimate Scott." The three stayed there for two or three days, and were so much pleased with their visit that they determined to repeat it every year at the same season. This was the origin of the Blair Adam Club, at which down to 1831, the year preceding his death, Sir Walter was a regular attendant. Once on their return to Edinburgh they stopped at the Hawes Ferry, and Scott stood on the beach watching the porpoises at play. "What fine fellows they are," said he, "I have the greatest respect for them. I would as soon kill a man as a *phoca*." These words were addressed to the Chief Commissioner, who was convinced then that Scott wrote THE ANTIQUARY. *Phoca* is, of course, a seal and not a porpoise, and the word is used correctly in the novel; but if Scott wanted to give his friend a hint as to the identity of the Great Unknown, he could hardly have chosen a better moment.

Among Scott's eminent legal contemporaries, who were at the same time among his bosom friends, William Erskine, Lord Kinnedder, held the first place; and his portrait is a very interesting one, since, unlike some of the others, it is exactly what we should have expected, and also because the friendship between the two men is a curious illustration of the well known fact that persons of exactly opposite tastes and habits so often become attached to each other, or, if of different sexes, fall in love with each other. The portrait here given is by Raeburn, and a skilled physiognomist might almost construct from it the character drawn by Lockhart. "Erskine," says the biographer, "was, I think, the only man in whose society Scott took great pleasure, during the more vigorous part of his life, that had neither constitution nor inclination for any of the rough

bodily exercises in which he himself delighted." Shooting, fishing, and coursing were in his eyes abominations. He would dismount from his pony on reaching the most trifling descent, and grew pale at a precipice. "His small elegant features, hectic cheek, and soft hazel eyes were the index of the quick sensitive gentle spirit within. He had the warm heart of a woman, her generous enthusiasm, and some of her weaknesses. A beautiful landscape or a fine strain of music would send the tears rolling down his cheek." And we see him on Raeburn's canvas exactly as he is on Lockhart's page. The expression on the face is one of infinite softness and tenderness: the mouth is weak, but the forehead is good; and the impression created by the whole is that nature rather meant him for poetry and literature than for law, though like Lord Mansfield, of whom the same thing was said, he was an excellent lawyer, and fully deserved the promotion which only came to him too late. Scott had a high opinion of his critical powers, and after writing the ballad of *BONNIE DUNDEE*, when he could not make up his mind whether it was good or bad, he notes in his Journal, "Ah poor Will Erskine, thou could'st and would'st have told me!" Erskine was Scott's confidant in his early love affair, and when asked long afterwards whether Scott ever committed a sonnet on his mistress's eyebrow, replied, "Oh yes, many," and that he and William Clerk, to whom they were shown, thought most of them very poor. Erskine's end was a melancholy one quite in keeping with his character.

Of the men of science whom Scott numbered among his friends, Sir Humphry Davy and Sir David Brewster were the chief, and we have both their portraits in the gallery.

Sir Humphry Davy, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, appears as a very handsome man of about forty, fashionably dressed and a great contrast to the figure he must have presented when he joined the famous coursing party on Newark Heath in his angling attire. "The most picturesque figure," writes Lockhart, "was the illustrious inventor of the safety lamp. He had come for his favourite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this, but he had not prepared for coursing fields, or had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought; and his fisherman's costume—a brown hat with flexible brims, surrounded with line upon line and innumerable fly-hooks—jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon, made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white cord breeches, and well polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him."

'Tis a pity he was never taken in this costume. But it was not only as a sportsman that Scott valued the philosopher. He had a vein of poetry in his nature, just as Scott had a liking for physical science, and in the evenings each strove to make the other talk his best, and they did so says Lockhart "more charmingly than I ever heard either on any occasion whatever." Scott's romantic narratives "touched a deeper chord" when he had Davy for a listener, and Davy brought to bear on scientific questions "a flow of imagery and illustration" of which the habitual tone of his table-talk or his prose writings could give no adequate notion. "Gude preserve us," whispered Laidlaw to the biographer on one winter evening at Abbotsford, "but this is a very superior occasion! Eh, sirs, I wonder

if Shakespeare and Bacon ever met to screw ilk other up!" Davy's is a singularly prepossessing countenance, not corresponding at all to that idea of a philosopher which Dr. Johnson's friend Edwards entertained. He had tried to be a philosopher, he said, but somehow or other cheerfulness was always breaking in. Davy's features have more the air of a cavalier, and his portrait certainly does not correspond to the popular notion of a scientific inventor, who ought to stoop and wear spectacles.

With Professor Wilson, again, it is just the reverse. He looks more of the professor and less of the convivial *littérateur* than one would have expected only from his writings. In this portrait he does not seem like a man who stood in need of Scott's admonition when he was a candidate for the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh University, namely that he "must leave off sack, purge, and live cleanly as a gentleman ought to do."

The two Ballantynes now claim their share of notice. The two brothers are really best described by the different dinners which they gave. James was all for turtle and venison, with iced punch, ale, and Madeira. Johnny treated his guests to Strasburg pies, a boar's head from Coblenz, or a turkey stuffed with truffles from the Palais Royal. But the two portraits do not betray these respective tendencies. The references to both of them in Lockhart's life are innumerable; and we fail especially to recognise in the mild and pensive countenance which here stands for the younger brother anything to remind us of *Rigdumfunnidos*. Nor do the head and shoulders here given of James Ballantyne appear to be those of "a short, stout, well-made man" as Scott describes him. Constable, "the Napoleon of the Publishing

Trade," painted by Raeburn, has some look of the real Napoleon about him, nor is there anything visible in his countenance at first sight to justify the nickname of the Crafty which he always bore. He is a portly, rather good-looking man with his tail-coat buttoned close up as was then the fashion, and on the whole decidedly prepossessing. Robert Cadell's portrait bespeaks the character of the man as much as most of them; a square, practical, sensible head and face, one to attract the confidence which Sir Walter very wisely reposed in him. And it was, as Mr. Caw says, largely due to his enterprise and friendship that the great novelist was able to make satisfactory arrangements with his creditors.

Henry Mackenzie, popularly known as the Man of Feeling and described by Sir Walter as the Scottish Addison, would startle the man in the street who might suppose that his nickname was due to the extreme tenderness of his nature. It was the title of a book which, though immensely popular in its own day, is a trifle too sentimental for the robust tastes which Scott was born to foster. The expression of his countenance is grave and rather melancholy; and it is unfortunate for him that he has been called the Scottish Addison since that forces a comparison upon us which Mackenzie might otherwise have escaped. His periodical essays, which are evidently modelled on THE SPECTATOR, are written with what our ancestors would have called great elegance, but they are as much like Addison's as a prize poem is like the *Æneid*. The truth is that when a friend was in the case Scott's heart was wont to get the better of his head. Washington Irving, Basil Hall, Canning, Hogg, Wilkie, all deserve more than a passing notice, but with a few

words on William Laidlaw we must proceed to what are perhaps the most interesting portraits of all, namely those which represent the originals of the best known characters in the Waverley novels.

To all readers of Lockhart's great work Laidlaw must be nearly as well known as Scott himself. He was a Scotch farmer, possessed with some literary tastes, and the author of at least one ballad which entitles him to a place among the poets. He accompanied Scott in many of his early rambles, and when he failed in business and was obliged to quit his farm, Scott offered him a cottage near Abbotsford, and from this time (1817) forward he appears as the intimate friend, the faithful and devoted servant of the Great Magician. His portrait here given is exceptionally characteristic. It is a face indicative of much gentleness and tenderness combined with mingled simplicity and refinement, qualities which of course endeared him to the Sheriff. It was Scott's idea at one time that Laidlaw might support himself by literary work; but the project was never carried out, and he became instead Scott's land-steward, amanuensis, and general factotum. He was always a leading figure at the Abbotsford Hunt, where he acted as adjutant; but interesting as is the picture drawn of him in the biography, he has a still greater claim on our gratitude if, as Lockhart hints, it is to him we owe ST. RONAN'S WELL.

We are likewise, according to the same authority, indebted to him rather than to Willie Elliot, the reputed original of Dandie Dinmont, for some of the most delightful touches in Scott's description of Charles-hope. As Willie Elliot was the first of the upland sheep-farmers that Scott visited, we may probably recognise his likeness in the thews

and sinews, the black shaggy bullet-head, the contempt for "a scart on the pow," and the addiction to "a gey stiff cheerer" which distinguished Dandie, and which do not at all correspond to the portrait of Willie Laidlaw. But the character of Dandie was in Lockhart's opinion suggested by that of Scott's old and faithful friend. "I have," he says, "the best reason to believe that the kind and manly character of Dandie, the gentle and delicious one of his wife, and some at least of the most picturesque peculiarities of the *ménage* at Charles-hope, were filled up from Scott's observation, years after this period, of a family, with one of whose members he had, through the best part of his life, a close and affectionate connection. To those who were familiar with him, I have perhaps already sufficiently indicated the early home of his dear friend William Laidlaw, among 'the braes of Yarrow.'"

Dinmont of course suggests Pleydell, and the portrait of Dean Crosbie who sat for him agrees as little with our previous idea of the Counsellor as Laidlaw's did with our conception of the stalwart Borderer. Crosbie was Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and noted like Pleydell for both his wit and his conviviality; but the face set before us by the painter is not the face we have always attributed to the hero of Clerihugh's. The Dean as here depicted is rather a puffy-faced gentleman without any trace either in the eye or the mouth of the humour which distinguished Pleydell. In the portrait he is apparently addressing the Court, or the Jury, and looks as little like the "Auld Sherra Pleydell, who was the man for sorting them, and the queerest rough spoken deevil too that ever ye heard," as he does like the Counsellor in his "Altitudes" or in

his encounter of wits with Dominie Sampson. We have always pictured Pleydell to ourselves as a well preserved old gentleman who had kept his waist, as well as his calves, with a lean shrewd face and a twinkling eye.

Next upon our list is George Constable of Wallace Craigie the original of the Antiquary, and here again we meet with an equal surprise as far as externals are concerned. "He had," says Scott himself, "many of those peculiarities of temper which long afterwards I tried to develope in the character of Jonathan Oldbuck." But Jonathan Oldbuck at the date of the story had not the hobbling gait which is apparent in the portrait, nor should we have thought that his countenance however sarcastic its expression ever wore so sour an aspect as Mr. Constable's. We all know what his feelings were when his theory of the Prætorium was shattered by Edie Ochiltree, or when he found that the chicken-pie and the bottle of port on which he had calculated for himself and Lovel after their fatiguing walk had disappeared in his absence. It is possible that on this occasion the cloud which overspread his visage may have caused it to bear some slight resemblance to the reputed original; but we cannot believe that the face of our dear old friend was habitually that which is here represented by the draughtsman.

The portrait of the actor Mackay who played the character of Bailie Nicol Jarvie, when a dramatic version of Rob Roy was produced at Edinburgh in 1819, shows us the face and attitude of one of whom Scott said that he was "the living Nicol Jarvie," and we can easily conceive on looking at his stage representation, that such was the expression of his face when he first recognised Rob Roy in the Glasgow Tolbooth. Yet we would

rather have seen a picture of the Bailie in Rob Roy's hut after the escape of Macgregor from the soldiers, when he "received with a kind of reserved dignity the welcome of Rob Roy and the apologies which he made for his indifferent accommodation," one of the most humorous situations in all the novels.

Scott took the name of Dalgetty from an old half-pay officer whose acquaintance he made in his childhood, but who in all but the name was evidently the prototype of Captain Clutterbuck in that inimitable Introduction to *THE MONASTERY*. Though the Captain who figures in the *LEGEND OF MONTROSE* is entirely a creation of Scott's fancy, some hints for his conversation, especially that part of it relating to the "honourable soldado's" adventures under the Lion of the North, were taken from the Memoirs of Colonel Robert Monro, and from the still better known Memoirs of Sir James Turner, printed by the Bannatyne Club. There is a portrait of Sir James in the gallery, a grim-looking veteran who, without Dalgetty's humour, was probably very much of the same mind with Dalgetty on matters of military service and military honour.

We have only one more genuine prototype to mention and that is Scott's own father, who sat for old Saunders Fairford. Old Mr. Scott appears in the dress which was commonly worn to near the end of the eighteenth century. The portrait was painted in 1758 and represents a handsome young man about thirty; but Scott's own description of him in his autobiography does not agree very well with the account of old Mr. Fairford. Mr. Scott was not, in the opinion of his son, specially well fitted by nature for the legal profession, nor was he at all absorbed in the pursuit of it. How different from

the "little dapper old gentleman" described in *REDGAUNTLET*, who scorned all paths to eminence except that of the law, and found the whole pleasure of his life in the transaction of his daily business. Scott clearly could not have intended to draw a portrait of his father in Saunders Fairford, though when he had to describe an old-fashioned Writer to the Signet of that date, it was natural that the one he knew best should be frequently before his eyes.

Of public characters who figure in the *Waverley* novels the gallery contains numerous portraits. Mary Stuart's is the one belonging to Lord Morton, according to Horace Walpole the most to be relied upon of any of her portraits. Sir Walter's exquisite description of this beautiful woman will be fresh in the reader's recollection, but the portrait, we think, does not quite come up to it. There is a something which it is difficult to define in Mary's face as here represented, suggestive not indeed of guilt or vice, but of the artifice which is woman's weapon and is doubly permissible in a Queen surrounded by enemies and traitors. Still as she appears in *THE ABBOT* we are not allowed to recognise even this small drawback to her charms.

The portrait of her son James the First, one of Scott's most masterly and delightful characters, does not call for much comment. It stands next to that of George Heriot, Jingly Geordie, as James called the accommodating goldsmith, with whom His Majesty loved a gossip, the dialogue between them in *THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL* coming as near the perfection of comedy as anything in our literature. Macaulay, not inclined to judge too favourably of the author of *WAVERLEY*, was so struck with the character of James, that he wondered why Scott had never attempted the

Duke of Newcastle (the Duke of the second and third Georges), between whom and King James he seems to have thought that there were many points of resemblance. The mention of *THE ABBOT* and Queen Mary naturally brings before us the saucy blue eyes and piquant figure of Catherine Seton; but in the group representing the first Lord Seton and his family we look for her in vain. Claverhouse is here, beautiful as he appeared to Steenie Steenson the piper when he saw him among the ghastly revellers in the Devil's Mansion,—“With his long dark curled locks streaming down over his laced buff coat, and his left hand always on his right spule-blade to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made.” It is the one known as the Leven portrait, and was probably taken, though nothing certain is known of it, when he was serving in the Dutch Guards under the Prince of Orange. Save for the mustachios it would correspond very well with the Claverhouse who breakfasted with Lady Margaret Bellen-den at Tillietudlem: “An oval face, a straight and well formed nose, dark hazel eyes, a complexion just sufficiently tinged with brown to save it from the charge of effeminacy, a short upper lip, curved upward like that of a Grecian statue, and slightly shaded by small mustachios of light brown, joined to a profusion of long curled locks of the same colour, which fell down on each side of his face, contributed to form such a countenance as limners love to paint and ladies to look upon.” The strangest contrast between the painter's portrait and the novelist's is in the case of Charlotte, Countess of Derby, whose picture by Lely would never suggest the stately dame depicted in *PEVERIL OF THE PEAK*.

And now when we look back upon the whole ground that we have

traversed what a world of memories crowds upon us! what a vivid panorama is spread out before us! what varied scenes of human interest, what grand historical dramas, what visions of romance and poetry, what combinations of humour and sorrow, of comedy and tragedy! The whole romance of the Stuarts is here unfolded from the flight of Mary into England at the end of *THE ABBOT* to the final retreat of Charles Edward to the Continent at the close of *RED-GAUNTLET*. The drama is complete within itself, the beginning and the end being perfectly well marked, and the intermediate events all leading up to the ultimate catastrophe. We see the tragedies of great old houses in *THE ANTIQUARY*, *GUY MANNERING*, and *THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR*. We see the old Scotch upper and middle class life with all its eccentricities, its prejudices, and its other strongly marked characteristics reflected in the Manor House at Tullyveolan, in the household of Monkbarns, in the parlour at Charleshope, and in the inn at Kippletringan. With the portraits of Charles Edward and Colonel Alastair Macdonell (the original of Fergus M'Ivor) to incite us, we may

accompany Waverley to Glennaquoich, follow his steps to Holyrood, and witness his introduction to the Prince who declared that no Master of the Ceremonies was needed to introduce a Stuart to a Waverley. Or we are with Oldbuck in the fisherman's cottage listening to the conscience-stricken old woman as she unfolds her tale of guilt, and falls lifeless to the ground as she concludes it. We may make one of the party in Colonel Mannering's drawing-room and witness that wonderful recognition of Bertram, which drew tears alike from both Pleydell and Dinmont, albeit not given to the melting mood. We hang with breathless interest on the escape of Mary from Lochleven, and the part assigned in it to Roland Graeme; and we hear the splash which announced that Rob Roy had burst his bonds and dropped into the river from the back of the trooper's horse. But we have said enough. These two volumes are sufficient to fire the imagination of the dullest elf who has, or ever had, the slightest power of appreciating the Waverley Novels. We have revelled in the associations they call up, and hope for many kindred enthusiasts.

THE OLD CONFLICT.

KARL MARIA VON WILNAU sat sketching out a violin part by an open window in the palace. He gave an impatient shake of the head and dotted in the piano accompaniment with little hieroglyphs like grains of sand across the staves. "It is very well to please the Grand Duke," he muttered; but this melody was too good to throw to a virtuoso who would turn it into mere fireworks.

The Grand Ducal gardens lay under his windows. Gardeners in brown liveries were carrying from invisible hot-houses orange-trees like pyramids of green above green tubs, and rose-bushes cut in the shape of peacocks. A court architect was marking places for the erection of countless green staves. They had at their tops large gilded crowns or great silvered glass globes that reflected the clear sky in a white blaze and the foliage of tall trees in rounded shadows. Garlands of bay-leaves and festoons of roses hung between the pillars of stone balustrades and a multitude of statues writhed over the basins of fountains.

"No, this is too good for a virtuoso piece," von Wilnau muttered. "This confounded executant will juggle it into a piece of display." He had very little time left; he had no more than half a lung and that he had to waste on the eternal conflict between the creator and the man who, standing on the platform, seems to be eternally intent on twisting the thing created into a means of displaying himself. The melody von Wilnau was jotting down was reminding him suavely of a classical temple on a

green island in a little green lake. He had rowed there with his Beloved and her mother ten years before. They had drunk iced sour-milk and eaten little cakes in the shape of true-love knots. Yes, it would be too good for a virtuoso piece. With a pathos and a tenderness that were in truth voluptuous, his little black marks represented what it is to be twenty, to love, to be upon the green water, to be back in the past with a Beloved who had been false because one was too poor,—with a Beloved who had married a professor of logic only to write one heart-felt letters after one had become more than famous.

Karl Maria was the last of a family of Austrian barons who had gradually ruined themselves by their devotion to the stage and to music. His father the Baron Ernst had even, under an assumed name, travelled as director of an operatic troupe. But in 182—Karl Maria's opera, *THE WOODLAND ROBBERS*, was being played in all the capitals of Europe. In Berlin the young officers fought duels with every man who refused to swear that the Woodland Hunt chorus was the swansong of music. But long poverty, the intrigues of Italian composers, the ceaseless speculations of his father, ill-usage from the King of Saxony, the dissipation of the small German courts and entanglements with dangerous and exacting women had left him almost at death's door and very poor. The Grand Duke of Hildburgshausen had carried him off,—at first to the ancient and solitary Castle of Tunnen where all

alone they had made music together ; afterwards, when they had returned to Hildburghausen, he had set at von Wilnau's disposal this suite of tall, cool rooms in the palace. There he was to sit, to write, and to recover ; the Grand Duke had commanded it with a mild and dogmatic enthusiasm. So he was writing a piece to do honour to the silver wedding of the Grand Duke with Luise, Archduchess of Austria. Boucher, the violinist of the King of Spain, had been engaged to play the violin part. He was famous for his likeness to Napoleon and for playing with the violin on his forehead or behind his back. "A little piece," the Duke had asked for. "Great people come—do me honour, thou—but not much trouble—no.—Spon-tini paid for that."

The great voice of a blackbird shouted out a stave of wild notes from the garden. It shouted, paused, listened to the faint notes of a rival. The composer shook his head and muttered a little. It was difficult to follow his own melody. The blackbird screamed a blatant and victorious pean and the voice of the court architect from the garden said, "But how sweetly the bird sings." Von Wilnau threw down his pen and shut the window. "Always these confounded executants," he said aloud. He had to pace up and down the room before he could catch again the thread of his thought. As he walked, tall, slender, straight, and with the skirts of his dressing-gown flapping about his knees like the tails of a military coat, he kept repeating aloud and abstractedly, "Con-foun-ded-ex-ecutants, con-foun-ded-ex-ecutants," in time with his thoughts.

The door opened, following a small knock. A little old man with a white head running back to a tiny pigtail above his collar, said, "Ah,

pardon, Baron, I thought I heard voices."

"I was confounding executants," said von Wilnau with a smile.

Landkammerrath Stock sighed deeply and looked out of the window ; his small shoes with buckles pattered like walnut-shells on the waxed floor. He was the Grand Duke's financial adviser and he was thinking of the expense of the festivities, of the silvered balls on staves, of the cost of the gardeners' liveries, of the Grand Ducal debts and of the German Confederation that, he dreaded, must soon put in receivers to adjust their finances. "Boucher has arrived," he said. "He is very like Buonaparte. It is true. . . . But three thousand thalers and the receipts of a benefit concert ! That is inconceivable in the Grand Duke."

"But Boucher is like Napoleon," von Wilnau laughed.

Bennett, von Wilnau's copyist, a young Englishman with a sanguine face but an overwhelmed expression, came softly into the room. "Boucher is making Napoleon-poses on the balcony of the Rothe Hahn," he said contemptuously. He took the sheets of manuscript to his table in a corner.

"I do not understand why we should like a man who looks like Buonaparte," Stock said. "The left wing here cost three million to rebuild after he burned it."

"People love it," von Wilnau said, "because when they have him they have also a pantomime of Napoleon ; when he plays with the violin on his forehead they have also a conjuring trick, and when he exhibits himself in the market-place a great many people see him and it is in the nature of mankind to desire to see what many others have seen. Why, I do not know, but it has nothing to do with art." Art ! It seemed to

him ridiculous that with one word they swept together, as if into one net, his creations and the childish poses and the melodious scrapings of a Boucher. He smiled indulgently.

Bennett, by nature a silent and blushing boy, suddenly spoke loudly: "And that man has dared to say that your Woodland Hunt is like the squeaking of pigs."

Von Wilnau spun round in his dressing-gown. Stock moaned: "And my august master gives this *Schelm* three thousand thalers and a benefit concert."

"Ah, but I and all the students shall be there," Bennett said. He bent his angry head above the violin score he was about to copy; his lips began to hum inaudibly and his blue eyes sparkled. "Beautiful, beautiful," he muttered in English.

"I shall not finish my piece for this man," von Wilnau said.

The voice of Madame von Wilnau came through the door. "It is an outrage. It is abominable, shameless to have him here." She appeared, tall, thin, very elegant and already a little grey. Her eyes sparkled too.

"*Lieber Karl*, this violinist has said that thou art a little *Koppelmeister*. Thou shalt make the Grand Duke chase him out with *gens d'armes*. Thou, a nobleman composing the selectest music!" Madame von Wilnau had been a court lady to Princess Leiningen and had married von Wilnau "for love" five years before. Von Wilnau's life had been a succession of these insults for years, over and over again. He was determined not to play with Boucher and not to compose for him, yet all the while he was considering the violin melody which in his thoughts grew more suave, more overpoweringly sweet and tearful. He wished to be alone.

But Blumine, the daughter of Court-

Theatre-Director Wandel, had already cast her arms round his neck. "Ah, Great One," she said . . . She was dressed in white muslin, had fair ringlets à l'anglaise, was thirty-two and the authoress of *ROSE AND THORN PIECES* which von Wilnau had undertaken to set to music. She fixed a rose passionately in the buttonhole of von Wilnau's dressing-gown. He was her poet's-nature's-soul's-brother. There were by this time also in the room two other young girls in white muslin and the Princess Amalie, the Grand Duke's younger daughter. She had the Hapsburg chin but the mildly enthusiastic blue eyes of her father. Regularly every morning she came but was too shy to speak to the Master more than three words of confusion.

"Great high-souled, heart-elevating art," Blumine intoned over her rose. "Thy thunderbolts shall strike this French Goth."

"My papa shall have him whipped," the Princess Amalie brought out in a deep voice, and then lapsed into hopeless confusion.

Madame von Wilnau looked with disfavour at Blumine and continued to the Landkammerrath: "Yes; I heard it from Herr von Wahlen who came in the Berlin coach along with this Boucher."

Stock said: "He is reputed the best violinist in the world and . . ." He shuffled his feet as if he were on the top of a hot stove. "My august master must have the best."

"But the whole city is repeating his insults with indignation."

Stock sighed. He was thinking that the best is very expensive.

The whole city was indeed repeating with indignation the sayings of M. Boucher. The Berlin papers had come by the post-coach that had brought him, and the Berlin papers, particularly the *SCHNELLPOST* of Herr

Saphir, were full of the sayings of Boucher. Having posed for half an hour on the balcony of the Rothe Hahn he was now eating a sardonic breakfast at a window in full view of the market-place. He was in a perfectly good humour; it was a holiday and great crowds had seen him. He had stood with his hand in his breast, his blue coat buttoned tightly; he had walked up and down with his head hanging; he had pressed an immense tricorne down on his forehead, his brows had worn the frown of destiny. He had done it better even than was usual with him. But Schmidt, the court music-publisher, was telling him that not more than half the tickets for his benefit had been sold.

"*Comment ça ?*" he snapped out.

"Our people, most worthy Herr Chevalier, dislike to pay five thalers for a seat. I would have you remark that this is not Paris."

Boucher stuck his fat hand into his breast and pondered. The heavy state-coaches of the palace guests rattled over the cobbles of the market place; yellow basket-work, the heads of white horses and the cocked hats and pigtails of coachmen passing along above the heads of merchants, of professors, of peasants in three-cornered hats and blue waistcoats, and of peasant maidens in immense black headdresses with wings fluttering as if ravens were perching on the backs of their heads,—all confirmed the observation. "Decidedly this is not Paris," Boucher grumbled, like Napoleon, between his lips. He continued to ponder over what device out of many he should employ.

"They resent too," Schmidt extended his ground timidly, "what you have said about our great master."

"*Hein ? Qui ça ?*" said Boucher with gruff astonishment. When he got the answer he opened his eyes

wide. "What, that little man lives here!" He laughed for a long time. "*Moi ?* I, and what have I said?" Schmidt wiped his silver spectacles and pulled out Saphir's SCHNELLPÖST to read. Boucher frowned, reflected and then spoke: "Oh, for that! What do I know what I said of these *melomanes*? It is absurd this Woodland Robber mania in Berlin." He had talked incautiously, after wine, at a banquet the Prince August had given in his honour. They had crowned him with violets interspersed with golden bees in honour of Napoleon.

"Our excellent citizens are all *melomanen*, all music-mad," Schmidt said. "We worship this sacred art in all its manifestations."

"And you have me," Boucher said. Schmidt shook his head and feared that there would be an outrage at the Chevalier's concert. General von der Buecher had already, in front of his, Schmidt's, shop torn into pieces the tickets he had bought.

"Waiter," Boucher's voice resounded in the large, cool and empty hall, "order for me at once the largest bouquet in the town; the finest flowers, and with tricolour ribbons. *Rasch! Galop!*" The thin strain of a violin under the window set his teeth suddenly on edge. A blind fiddler, drawn along by a Spitz dog, had halted before the orange-trees in front of the hotel doors, hoping to attract attention from the King of Spain's violinist. "Waiter, ah, waiter, ah, ah," Boucher shuddered and called. He pulled a gold piece out of his fob: "Give this,—no, stay; tell that poor dear man to be quiet, but to wait there,—to wait, but ah, for the grace of God to be silent."

Still shuddering he began to pace the hall whose lace curtains in the windows at either end shivered in a slight breeze; the ancient parquet

flooring, loosened by years, cracked under his feet, his hands were clasped behind his back. Suddenly he said, "*Comment s'appelle ce lieu ?*" The wideness of his campaigns across the earth, conquering with his bow cities and principalities, came out in the question.

"Hildburgshausen."

"Did the Emperor fight a battle here?"

"*Ach*, yes. My warehouse was burnt with four thousand pieces," Schmidt sighed. Boucher approached him with little sighs. He pinched Schmidt's ear after the fashion of Napoleon: "Then this shall be our battle of Hildburgshausen. It is won." As if he were directing Ney (he half felt that he was) he commanded Schmidt to print, that morning, in his largest Roman type:

I the undersigned declare that the "Woodland Robbers" is the Swan Song of Music.

(Signed) BOUCHER.

Violinist to the King of Spain.

(Attested) L. SCHMIDT.

Court Music-Publisher to the Grand Duchy.

"*Aber*, Herr Chevalier—" Schmidt began. His mild and slow mind had taken in only that Boucher had for the Master a contempt that sickened and pained him.

"Print it and affix it to your sun-blinds," Boucher commanded. "I am ready to do homage to your master. Why not?" Why not? What did it matter to him, a composer more or less? These fellows made tunes that he endowed with being? What would they be without him? The earth without the kisses of the sun, Eve before life was given to her. But if they wanted adoration, why not? And "the swan song of music." What was that idiotic phrase? He was ready

to subscribe to it. No doubt THE WOODLAND ROBBERS was that for Hildburgshausen. The thing was that Hildburgshausen must quiver at the first notes from under his bow, as Paris had quivered, and Berlin and Madrid and London. This little nest mad about music, the "Music Temple" of Germany, he must conquer too.

His body automatically preserved the heavy immobility of Napoleon in meditation; the music-publisher was awed into silence and mute wonder. That too delighted him, for applause and wonder were the breath of his delightful life. He revelled in his orders from foreign sovereigns, in his likeness to Napoleon, in his playing with the violin on his forehead, and in the notes that his bow drew out. Ah those tones, long drawn out like the first notes of a nightingale, suspended like a holding of the breath, pure and wailing as the voice of the night, penetrating like frost, tremulous like love. The rage and fury of these *melomanes* pleased and amused him too. It was part of the life. He imagined them running about in the palace, fussing and intriguing. This utterly unimportant Kappellmeister von Wilnau would be bribing the orchestra to play false notes in an accompaniment, and women urging their lovers to hiss. Ah, he knew those ropes. He nodded his head, tapped with his foot. "The battle is already won, my dear Schmidt," he repeated.

A state-carriage from the palace clattered to the hotel door. The fat, dappled horses nearly pushed the blind fiddler off his feet. A footman, with a thin pigtail and a chocolate-coloured livery coat, appeared to conduct Boucher to the Grand Duke and to carry his violin. Boucher stood on the doorstep surveying the crowd in the market-place whose high cream facades climbed into peaks like flights of

steps. "I go to do homage," he said to Schmidt in a resounding voice, "to the Apollo of Hildburgshausen." Then he greeted the blind fiddler in German: "*Ach armer Kerl*, poor dear fellow. All the world rejoices and you are sad alone. Shall it be said! Never! Never! Give! Give!" He dragged the violin from under the fiddler's white and yellow beard, he tuned it with grimaces of disgust. He stood behind the old hat that lay upturned on the cobbles. His hand smote the bow on the strings as an axe strikes a tree. All over the market-place high and piercing notes penetrated startled ears and arrested footsteps. His figure in the blue coat, knee-breeches, and enormous tricorne swayed to the rhythm. His eyes were closed, his face pale, inert, threatening, abstracted and as if doomed. Peasant girls who saw it shuddered beneath their immense black wings. He played *Partant pour la Syrie*, the Napoleonic tune that they remembered very well there. When his eyes opened he seemed to be an eagle, looking out wildly over endless seas and chained to the black rock, St. Helena. His notes began to fall in a variation like sparks from an anvil, and silver coins were already dropping into the fiddler's hat. An old peasant from a neighbouring Duchy cried out: "*Oh, jo! Det et wat!*" He began to dance, jostled in the crowd and snapping his stiff fingers over the rim of his three-cornered hat. "They will know me at least here," Boucher grumbled between his teeth. "That is the first point gained."

Karl Maria von Wilnau was still turning over in his mind the piece of music he had begun. Its aspect for him had suddenly changed. He had begun it as a little piece in honour of the Grand Ducal silver wedding, but suddenly a beautiful development had

blossomed before him. He saw it now plainly to the last note, and he was worrying to put it on paper. But his rooms were more crowded than ever. The Grand Duke had come to pay his accustomed morning visit, and had brought with him his nephew, the Duke of Suffolk, and the great Staatsminister, von Wolfgang, from W——.

The Duke, a ruddy personage in a scarlet uniform, had been sent against his will to get a wife from some German court, because, the Princess Charlotte being dead, heirs must be raised for the Throne of England. He stared at von Wilnau with perplexity, his good-natured face above the too tight collar of his uniform having the air of an apple, very red, stuck on to the neck of a wine flagon. He extended a finger and said that music was a fine thing. The austere form of the Staatsminister from W——, old, flexible and courtly, bowed its head in stately fashion. A feeling of awe was on the faces of Blumine and the young girls. Their lips parted and they looked swiftly from von Wolfgang to von Wilnau.

Von Wolfgang said, amid silence, how happy was Germany. Its rulers delighted to offer hospitality to practitioners in all the arts, and thus mankind went forward towards humanity and pure joy. Frau von Wilnau rustled frostily, von Wilnau's eyes flashed, but no retort occurred to him because he was thinking of his melodies. The Duke of Suffolk beckoned von Wolfgang rather querulously through the doors into the next room of the suite. He asked huskily why the devil the Grand Duke had brought them to see a fellow in a dressing-gown.

"Head better?" the Grand Duke was asking of von Wilnau. "Sleep? Not cough? No, no." His eyes sparkled mildly and affectionately

under thin white brows. He was sixty-two, he owned seven million souls, an orchestra, a state-opera, and a conservatorium. He had ruled absolutely in Hildburghausen for twenty-seven years. He was subject to fits of passing imbecility, and once he had walked through the market-place in a scarlet woman's dress, but he played the double-bass, the cyther, and the water-organ, all like a master. "Ah, and my little piece!" he asked. "But not overwork, dear fellow thou. No, no."

The young girls were whispering together in the corner behind Bennett who continued to copy the violin part. But von Wilnau in a reverie had erected a whole scheme for his music-poem. In the first soft and agitated melody there were already symbolised Young Love and the temple in the lake: then came the Call of Honour, Germany lying at the foot of the Tyrant; then the Last Dance, a waltz soft and flowing (he was the great master of the waltz), a timid declaration, a tender avowal from the heroine, the Departure to the War; then War. The lover returned to find the heroine dead in virgin white. Then there should be tearful reflections above the bier and a coda in which the violin expressed in the words of Geibel, "A sad eternal longing after early death," and for the piano an accompaniment typifying mysteriously the soul of the young girl yearning to manifest itself to her lover.

Von Wolfgang was explaining to the Duke of Suffolk that von Wilnau had no poetry, no pure fancies in his soul. He only wrote beerhouse melodies that had inflamed the patriotic spirit of Berlin. So at least friend Zelter had written to him about THE WOODLAND ROBBERS; he himself had not heard it. The Duke said:

"Oh, we've a short way with them in England. A French fellow was singing a dreadful long song at Devonshire House. So Devonshire took hold of his arm and said '*C'est assez, mon cher.*'" Von Wolfgang said that many French songs were not worth the attention of an august audience.

"Oh, it was a good song enough," replied the Duke.

But the Grand Duke was gently pushing von Wilnau into their room, towards a corner. "Boucher insulting!" he whispered. "Want'st not have him sent away? Will do if askest." Von Wilnau was confident in the beauty of his piece; he cared nothing about Boucher for the moment. He shook his head. "Must have best fiddler in the world for my feast," the old man spluttered.

Von Wilnau smiled at him affectionately. "You shall hear him play what I have written of sweetest," he said. There was a rustling in the other room that now contained only the women and Bennett, an "*Ach*," from Madame von Wilnau, a small shriek—evidently Blumine's.

The Duke of Suffolk who had his face towards the door of communication exclaimed: "By God, *Buona parte!*"

He was standing, solemn and sinister in the doorway. He seemed to advance imperceptibly, as once before, Napoleon had walked over those polished floors that dimly reflected his slow and heavy gait, his cream-coloured breeches, and his blue coat. He made a false step towards von Wolfgang and then saw von Wilnau in the corner. He extended both hands. "*D'abord homage au Maître,*" he exclaimed. "Homage first to the Master of THE WOODLAND ROBBERS."

The Duke of Suffolk examined his back curiously through a single

eyeglass. "He will start those seams if he bows any more. That coat's a deuced good fit," he said.

Afterwards Boucher saluted the others with a certain reserve. Madame von Wilnau was holding, with an embarrassed air, an immense bouquet, like pink and white sugar icing, bound with tricolour ribbons that reached to the floor. Eventually von Wilnau was left alone with his melody. The presence of Boucher filled him with a desire greater than ever to hear it, and to utilise the man's matchless skill. He did not care whether Boucher were sincere or insincere. Then the whole matter vanished from his mind. He began writing. He wrote very fast, tossing the sheets to Bennett across the table, without once looking up. In the garden the rose-trees and the shining balls were all in symmetrical lines and alleys converging upon circles. The royal guests came out in groups that followed the blue uniform of the King of Prussia, the black coat of the Staatsminister, or the white dress of Baroness Speyer according as they loved power, wisdom, or beauty. But for von Wilnau they remained noiseless and invisible.

Boucher came in for the rehearsal, walking on tip-toe to bend over Bennett's copying. He whispered for the young man's ear: "*Que c'est beau! Ah, que c'est beau!*" He cast about in his mind for an expedient to avoid playing this queer, odd, sentimental stuff. It was so easy that a child of twelve could play it. Was that a thing to set before the first virtuoso in Europe? But the Grand Duke had commanded it.

Von Wilnau threw down his pen. It was finished, but he read backwards the last few bars of the tranquil close. Gradually he grew aware that Boucher was there. His resonant voice was congratulating

himself on having the honour to give to the world for the first time pearls of so exquisite a sensibility. Von Wilnau with a gracious wave of the hand said he was fortunate that his humble little piece should come to life at the touch of so great an artist. He explained the idea of the music—the love, war, death and the longings.

Boucher said, "It is you who give the life to us poor executants." At the same time his hands played, on the violin concealed behind his back, with accuracy and precision but quite low, the opening bars. He was unable to deny himself that pleasure, but he did it while speaking as if it were done in absence of mind. Von Wilnau said, "You will not need to rehearse, it is so simple." "He has some trick up his sleeve. Does he wish to make me break down?" thought Boucher, but said out loud, "Ah, but give me the pleasure and the great privilege."

The composer felt for the virtuoso a dislike and a distrust, the instinctive dislike of the slow and the sincere for the brilliant and the assured, the instinctive distrust that the thinker feels for the talker. But he had also so intense a desire to hear his work that he half persuaded himself it must overwhelm even such a man as the great violinist. He struck his sweet and muffled opening chords. "What? This fellow is a pianist as few are. They did not tell me that," Boucher thought. Bennett stood up to turn over the leaves for his master. At the end Bennett could not see the notes for tears. Such playing, such music he was never to hear again. The composer was bending over the keys and panting; these long mornings of chatter, the work and its strong emotions were killing him very fast. Boucher in an immobile silence that very well represented the motionless-

ness of a man overcome, was grinding his teeth. "He has dished me, this little Kappellemeister," he thought. "Is this a piece to set before a man like me?" It was as simple as a child's exercise, and it seemed to him that the violin, for more than half the time, played long, sustaining notes while the piano gave out suave melodies. A piece!" He broke the silence with an immense sigh. "*Mais, c'est énorme!*" He said that it would reduce the audience to tears. That was precisely what it would do in Hildburgshausen.

Von Wilnau said, "Ah, if I only had your playing always to inspire me." And Bennett added with a generous penitence, "Such a talent as yours, Chevalier, there will never be again."

"It is merely the second fiddle here," Boucher returned, adding gently, "And you have the grace to permit me to improvise a cadenza. What generosity! Ah, at least at the end I will show them," he meditated.

Von Wilnau started. "A cadenza? But that is not in the spirit of the piece." In the fury of his composition he had completely forgotten that perquisite of the virtuoso. It came to him as a passionate conviction that those fireworks into which Boucher so ably introduced the trilling of nightingales, waterfall effects, the baaing of sheep, and even a bell that, hidden beneath his coat tails he played with a string from his heel,—that one of the great "Boucher potpourris" should not here have an opportunity to exist. In face of Boucher's cold and hungry eyes he felt suddenly the distrust that had vanished beneath that heavenly playing. "No," he said in a hard voice, "there can be no cadenza."

Boucher's face fell in spite of his Napoleonic mask. "It is unheard of," he stuttered.

"Monsieur, it is impossible," von Wilnau said coldly. "Your cadenza would ruin my tranquil close."

"Even von Beethoven allowed one," Boucher urged. "Monsieur le Baron, this is lacking in generosity."

"It is not a question of generosity." Von Wilnau's eyes flashed, and he spoke with an exaggerated distinctness. Bennett trembled.

"One does not stand there to play for nothing," Boucher said hotly. "This piece comes at the end of the state-concert. I have my benefit to think of." He would make no impression at the last; the climax would be for von Wilnau. He was a pianist, even, as few were in that *genre*. They had not told him that. And the composer of the piece! He, Boucher, would be overwhelmed and forgotten. It was not thus that one treated a guest of distinction. His face had quite lost its immobility, his lips quivered, he uttered an "*Ah, mais non,*" of vexation and dismay.

"A cadenza is impossible," von Wilnau insisted; but he felt concern and even contrition. It was true this was not a virtuoso piece such as Boucher had the right to expect. "A cadenza, no." He cast his mind rapidly back over his piece. "Ah, but there is the battle motive."

"Eh, eh?" said Boucher.

Von Wilnau considered for a moment. "It would be an honour to me,"—he recovered his composure—"if there the Chevalier would improvise a solo passage." He imagined the MARSEILLAISE introduced into his piece and cannon shots and the Napoleonic attitudes; but afterwards he would resume the blithe and touching melody of the Hero's Return to the Beloved. "But my conscience forbids a cadenza at the end." He smiled.

Boucher said, "Ah, you are generous; be sure I will repay you." But

that he decided should be the end, and his alert and determined mind cast about for an expedient. "Till to-night," he said and went away.

The little state concert-room was covered with flowers. They framed the panels of Fragonard's paintings and immense baskets of them stood beside each of the gilded chairs. Spontini, conducting the opening bars, grumbled, "My singers will have their voices affected by these flower-smells," and he called on the trombones with a petulant jerk of his baton. The Grand Duke nodded in time to the march and his wife, by his side, shut her eyes. The fourth entry was that of Boucher. The King of Prussia whispered to the Grand Duchess: "Did you hear? When I said to him: 'Astonishing your likeness to Buonaparte,' he answered: 'But a more spiritual version.' The rascal!"

The Grand Duchess answered languidly, "How charming to see the Ogre fiddling."

"Nero," someone whispered from behind.

He played of course, the *TRILLO DEL DIAVOLO*. But the silence of the audience enraged him. The Grand Duke forbade applause because it jarred on him. When he came on again he played like a demon. "*Diantre*, I will show them," he grumbled between his teeth. He drowned the notes of the small orchestra. "Ah, ah," he said to himself because the King whispered to his neighbour.

"Again, Bis—Majesty of Prussia begs," the Grand Duke called to him. He played his own *BARCAROLLE* in a tumult of disdain and exultation. It gave him a shudder of excitement, the silence and the eyes fixed on him. It was like playing to the Sphinx. "Forty centuries look down on me," he grumbled with the violin pressed to

his jaw, his fingers moving like snakes and his eyes fixed threateningly upon a lackey. "No, forty crowned imbeciles look up. Ah, but you shall clap yet." The perspiration ran down his back. Spontini bowed his sallow Italian face to him and the violinists made silent motions of applause with their bows at the end of the Beethoven concerto. "You shall clap yet," he muttered. But there were two of von Wilnau's songs from *LYRE AND SWORD*, and the composer was smiling when he came down from playing the accompaniment.

The black-bearded bass who had been singing said to Boucher: "Mon-sieur, you are a great artist. But is it true that you said *those* songs were like drunken shouts?"

Boucher regarded him with an austere and threatening scowl. "You shall see how I do honour to this master," he said. He spat out inaudible oaths and he changed his violin for the last piece, laying his Amati tenderly on the table and snatching a Guadagnani from his valet. "For a special effect," he said to von Wilnau who was waiting to go on to the platform. Von Wilnau thanked him.

He got in front of von Wilnau at the head of the platform stairs, started, came back, took him by the hand and, bent nearly double, led him to the piano. Von Wilnau, wiping his fingers on a lace handkerchief, looked into the blaze of the hall. "Ten years ago," he thought, "this might have done me some good." His music about to sound seemed like a prospect of falling into a blissful and tired dream. The keys felt silky and soft. Then he was playing. It was indeed as if a boat were gliding from the shore of a green lake. Boucher's notes were like things not drawn from a string; they existed, as light shines, without relation to

the earth or to the will of man. Von Wil nau wondered where, in this vulgar charlatan lay the secret of these heavenly tones. His own fingers were rippling caressingly, and with instinctive loyalty he subordinated the accompaniment to the violin. Boucher's playing was like the charm of a very beautiful woman whom to trust is to know the bitterness of death. Von Wil nau sighed; he had known that. The waltz tune tripped by so that you heard the rustling of feet and felt the passion of an embrace. His heart began to beat with the March to War. It was going, it was going,—ah, this was life! He struck the last chords of that part with a sigh of contentment. It reconciled him to Boucher's solo, and he felt a deep affection as he whispered, "Chevalier, now!"

The first notes of the violin seemed to poise themselves in a flight and he closed his eyes. Four harsh, short chords startled him with their familiar harmony. They resolved themselves into a horn-effect, familiar too, answered faintly and then given again. Von Wil nau said, "Ah Heaven!" Boucher was imitating the opening of *THE WOODLAND ROBBERS*. Von Wil nau refused to believe his ears. But there came the melody of the Wild Hunt. It filled him with rage and dismay. It was as if he had connived at this dragging in of his own work; in front von Wolfgang would be saying that here was another vulgar trick. He jerked round on his seat and whispered, "Enough, enough!" But the song *Adelaide*, ah, swam out from the violin. His music seemed to him suddenly vulgar and repulsive. The veins on his forehead stood out and he struck three violent chords.

But Boucher used them to open the Demon's Chorus from the middle of the opera, as if those chords too

had been preconcerted with von Wil nau. Boucher played like a man possessed, his violin seemed to contain all the instruments of the orchestra. But at last the shrieking of the demons, the grunts of the wizard, the whistling of the wind, and the hoots of the owl, poured all together in a tumultuous discord from the violin. Von Wil nau drew a deep breath and pressed his nails into his palms; it must be coming to an end now. He was going at all costs to efface this horror with the beauty of his last music, he was going to show this man how, with his own playing, his own temperament, his beloved and pure art, he could retrieve this despicable fiasco of display.

Boucher was playing the final chords; von Wil nau turned sideways towards the audience that had flushed and excited faces already. He expected to catch Boucher's whisper of "Now!" and he moved his hands on to the keys that seemed to caress his fingers with a reassurance of success.

A young footman, he saw, started forward as if to catch something about to fall; the animated face of the young Baroness Speyer had suddenly a look of alarm and of surprise. The eyelids of the tired Grand Duchess contracted with a shudder at a musical jar, vibrating and hollow, that ended on a tearing and splitting crash. In an alarmed silence it pierced von Wil nau's ear like a sharp and inconceivable blow.

Boucher with a convulsed motion of the shoulders was tearing at something between his knees. "Never another note," he panted out, "shall sound from this divinely honoured instrument." His violin hung in his hand, bits of brown wood tangled together with the strings swinging from the black neck like the debris of a mangled bird. He crushed it

beneath his feet. And he did this, the greatest possible honour to von Wil nau, with a passion so breathless, and such abandonment to the comedy in hand that he was really crying with triumph as he cast himself on to von Wil nau's neck. "*Ah cher maître, que je l'aime !*" he sobbed.

The aristocratic bewilderment of the audience issued into a roar of applause that the Grand Duke himself led with tears of enthusiam. The great violinist had proved beyond denial at once his virtuosity and his generous admiration of the master ;

he had drawn applause from the silent people, and he had made it impossible for the piece to proceed and efface his effect. For his valet had already carried away his other violin even had von Wil nau been in a condition to play.

Perhaps that does not make much difference to the fact that Hildburgshausen and the rest of the world still sometimes weep over Karl Maria's music poem, or that Boucher, violinist to the King of Spain, died, after having been for some years forgotten, in want.

FORD MADOX HUEFFER.

SCHOOL-FEES AND SCHOOL-MASTERS.

IN the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education issued in 1895 the following passages occur :

The statistics collected by the Assistant Masters show that while in ten of the best schools the average salary is £242.77, the average in 190 others is only £105.19, the average of all being no more than £135.22.

The Head-Masters are quite in agreement with the Assistants as regards the inadequacy of the salary-fund in many schools. Salaries as low as £60 or £70 were reported, and stress laid upon the still more dispiriting circumstance that men go on from year to year with salaries never rising above £100 or £120.

My attention having been recently drawn to the inadequate salaries paid both in boys' schools and girls' schools, I enquired of a well known firm of Educational Agents as to the present condition of the market, asking, among other things, whether there was any indication that men were being deterred from entering the profession by the poor prospects which it offers. Their reply was strongly in the affirmative; they told me that neither the quantity nor the quality was the same as it was some years ago; that head-masters who used to engage first-class men, now have to be content with third-class men; that tutors at Oxford and Cambridge caution their pupils against allowing themselves to "drift into teaching."

Parents who are used to paying fees of from £80 to £200 per annum at preparatory boarding-schools, and whose expenses for sons at public schools sometimes run up to £300 a

year, will not be prepared to accept the statement that the teaching profession is underpaid, their personal experience inclining them to the opposite view; but, nevertheless, the state of affairs revealed by the Royal Commission eight years ago, and confirmed by the Educational Agents to-day, is deplorable. The enquiries of the Royal Commission were confined to a restricted area; they did not cover the whole list of 550 secondary schools in Whitaker's Almanack, nor the whole of the large body of private schools, preparatory and other. Had the Commission been able to enquire further, it would have discovered an even worse state of affairs; it would have discovered that in only a few of the well-known public schools are the prospects such as to attract young men of good ability and proved competence who can get other work to do, and that the salary-fund of the whole of the rest of the body of secondary schools in the country is so low as to place the teaching profession at a disadvantage compared with other professions.

Before entering into an enquiry as to the causes which have brought about this undesirable state of affairs, it is perhaps necessary to clear away an objection to pursuing the enquiry at all. It might, for instance, be argued that the question is one of no public interest, that the public and the teaching profession strike a bargain for their mutual profit, the public giving as little as it can, and the profession taking as much as it can get; that to interfere with the

liberty of bargain is unnecessary and injudicious. If this is so, why have we a Board of Education with an advisory committee? Why do we provide for the registration of teachers? Why do we inspect schools? Why, in a word, does the State interfere in any way between parents and children and teachers? Or again, it might be said that the teaching profession is not different from any other profession, that all professions are underpaid, that in all professions there is excessive competition, that if the school-masters are underpaid, so are most of the clergymen, and medical men, and solicitors; there is no occasion for interference, there is no ground for interference.

The State, however, has already interfered. Acting through the Charity Commissioners and Endowed Schools Commissioners, and now through the Board of Education, it has fixed and fixes the fees paid in a very large number of secondary schools throughout the country; the school-master is not allowed to bargain with the parent; he must accept what the State thinks fit. It is true that the State has not as yet interfered directly with the proprietary schools, though it does so indirectly by establishing a scale of fees for the schools wholly or partially under its control.

The status of the teaching profession is, however, different from that of any other profession. Every other professional man is paid for services rendered to the man who pays him, who is of an age to judge whether he has received value for his money; the teacher is always paid on behalf of another person, and that person is not of an age to estimate the value of the service rendered.

Moreover, the interests of the State and the interests of the parent in the matter of education are not

the same. The State wants more than the parent. In all ranks and classes there is the same divergence of interest, though not in the same degree, between the parent and the State, which has made compulsory education necessary, and Factory Acts forbidding the employment of children below a certain age. The State thinks of the competence of the next generation; the parent of how the next generation may earn a livelihood and cease to be a burden to himself. Hence comes the perpetual struggle between parents and teachers, as old as the days of Socrates, and felt to-day in the most expensive schools no less than in the free schools. The teacher takes the side of the State; his ambitions for his pupils are wider than those of the parent; not content with turning out a mere money-getting animal, he wants to train a competent citizen.

Thus to the State the character of the men who form the teaching profession is all-important, while to the individual parent it is of small importance; all that he wants could be found by unrestricted freedom of bargain with the profession.

Whether these views are right or wrong is, however, not a matter of much moment, seeing that the State has already interfered with the liberty of bargain. Only a small minority of the 550 schools in Whitaker's list are schools whose fees have not been fixed by the State.

When attention was drawn in the middle of the last century to the condition of endowed schools and schools connected with various Charities, and when soon afterwards the enterprise of re-construction and organisation was taken up, the question of the salary-fund, and of its ultimate influence upon the teaching profession, entirely escaped notice. Speaking generally, it may be said that the

aim of the men who guided our policy in those days was to bring a certain type of education within reach of as many persons as possible. Fees were therefore fixed by the two Commissions absolutely without reference to the necessary cost of providing that type of education; only one thing was considered, what could the parents in each locality concerned afford to pay; and as the locality was allowed to have a word in the matter, the figure eventually fixed was that which the parents felt inclined to pay. Had the conditions of education remained unchanged since those days, the state of the salary-fund would have looked somewhat different to-day; it would still have been inadequate, but not quite so inadequate.

I have before me an Eton school-list of 1828; from this the change which has taken place in the character of secondary education may be illustrated.

In 1828 there were 509 boys in the upper school at Eton, and 41 in the lower school; there were eleven masters, including the head-master, but not including the extra masters; of these 11 masters, two were assigned to the lower school. Thus in the upper school there was one master to every 56 boys, in the lower school one to every 20; at the present time, taking upper and lower school together, and including the extra masters, there is one master at Eton to every 16 boys. Supposing the masters, head-master included, to have been entirely paid from the salary-fund derived from fees, it is clear that there was available for each master from that source in 1828 more than three times as much as is available now. As Eton in those days, under the vigorous rule of Dr. Keate, was entering on its great period of expansion, evidently parents were satisfied with an organisation which

provided only one master to every 56 boys.

It is not easy to gather from the old school-list exactly how the 509 boys in the upper school were distributed between their nine masters. The divisions were as follows. *SIXTH FORM*, 23 boys: *FIFTH FORM, Upper Division* 77 boys, *Middle Division* 75 boys, *Lower Division* 95 boys: *REMOVE*, 115 boys: *FOURTH FORM*, 124 boys. If each of these forms or divisions was assigned to one master, we have only six divisions to nine masters; there are, however, in the middle and lower divisions of the fifth form, in the remove and fourth form, lines which seem to indicate sub-divisions; these would give us 11 divisions to the nine masters, two of whom must obviously have taken two of these sub-divisions together. However this may have been, it is quite certain that the sixth form numbered 23 boys, and the upper division of the fifth form 77; and we know from other sources that even as recently as the head-mastership of Dr. Hawtreay more than 100 boys were assigned to one master, while Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt tell us of even bigger numbers at Christ's Hospital. Eton, in fact, was better off in this respect than other schools, where very large classes were the rule. At the present time classes of 25 are the rule in the public schools; where the numbers are larger, various forms of private tuition sometimes counteract the evil. Now it is quite clear that it is more expensive to assign one master to every 25 boys than one to every 77 boys; and that if the payment of the individual master was to remain the same, the fees should have been increased in proportion. The facts are, however, that while the parent has succeeded in reducing the numbers assigned to each master, the fees have not been increased in propor-

tion; in some schools they have not been increased at all.

Let us now take the case of the extra masters. There were six extra masters at Eton in 1828, who taught the following subjects: writing, Italian and Spanish, drawing, fencing, dancing, and French. What these masters taught was entirely extra. The subjects were taught out of school hours, the fees being paid by the parents to the masters themselves, and not passing through the general salary-fund. The writing-master alone taught arithmetic and mathematics; the eleven regular masters were not required to teach anything but Latin and Greek. At the present day mathematics, French, German, chemistry, and physics, are included in the school lessons at Eton, and in some other schools the curriculum is even greater. More subjects necessarily mean more masters; but again the fees have not been universally increased in proportion, and the supplementary income which might have been earned by teaching extra subjects on a large scale has been cut off.

Large charges have also been laid upon schools in the form of buildings. Not only have expensive laboratories and lecture-rooms for scientific work come to be considered an essential, if not the essential, part of the equipment of a school, but there has been a demand for improved class-rooms. Here again we may illustrate from Eton. A visitor can see the rooms in which the 550 boys were taught in 1828: they are all contained in the old quadrangle; in Christopher Wren's building on its west side, and the ground floor of the old building on the north side, and were inadequate even for 500 boys. Now there is a whole town of class-rooms, partly necessitated by the fact that the school has doubled in numbers since 1828, but partly also by the fact

that accommodation which was thought good enough then is not thought good enough now. Boys were still taught in the miserable dark dens under the Upper School long after the new class-rooms were built. What has been done at Eton, has been done all over the country; the improvement in buildings was necessary, but it was not necessary to diminish the salary-fund to pay for erecting them.

But, we shall be told, the schools have endowments. In the first place, very few schools have any considerable endowment, and in the second place, only a very small proportion of any endowment is devoted to the salary-fund. Here again the pocket of the parent was the first thing thought of, and the endowments were, and are, frittered away in scholarships. If a considerable sum is given to the salary-fund from an endowment, it generally goes in a lump to the head-master; this is not unreasonable if the salaries of the other masters are provided for adequately from the fees, but they are not.

Thus three extra charges have been laid upon the schools since the beginning of the last century, an increased number of masters in proportion to the boys, an increased number of subjects taught, an increased permanent charge on buildings.

There are reasons for which it is not advisable to mention schools by name in connection with the question of fees and salaries. I may, however, go so far as to say this, that having picked out at random 22 Schools from *THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS YEAR-BOOK* which I know are practically doing the same work, I find that the tuition-fees for boys over 13 vary from £6 per annum to £42. This last figure is passed by Eton where private tuition in addition to tuition in school is compulsory, the two united amount-

ing to £50. The two extreme cases show how little endowment has to do with the salary-fund; for Eton is a richly endowed school, but charges the highest tuition-fees of all, whereas the lowest school on the list is very poorly endowed indeed. Four of the schools in the list are without any endowment; their tuition-fee is in each case over £25, the figures being £29, £27 15s., £30, £25 4s., respectively. As these schools are entirely dependent upon fees, it may be assumed that £25 represents the lowest fee at which the form of education in question can be provided; from this it follows that schools which do the same work, and only charge £12, £16, £15, must either have a sufficient endowment to make up the difference between such a sum and at least £25, or must underpay their staff in proportion. The latter alternative represents the real state of the case, as is shown by the report of the Royal Commission. Even in the unendowed schools which charge from £25 to £30, the salary-fund is inadequate, and men go on from year to year, in the words of the report, earning not quite such low salaries as those mentioned in the report, but salaries which compare unfavourably, not only with other professions, but even with the wages of a highly skilled artisan. No wonder college tutors caution their pupils against drifting into teaching.

But, we shall be told, there are the boarding-fees. Granted that in some twenty schools in the country the boarding fees do by indirectly contributing to the salary-fund improve the prospects of young masters, and putting on one side the fact that this is an undesirable and precarious way of earning money in a profession, the fact remains that in only a few schools are there a sufficient number of boarding-houses to go round among the

men of ten years' service, and that precisely those schools in which the salary-fund is lowest are those in which the boarding element is weakest. Moreover the Endowed Schools and Charity Commissioners in their tender solicitude for the pockets of the parent have also limited the boarding-fees; such figures as £48 and £50 occur. A boy is at school about thirty-eight weeks in the course of the year, and it takes very good management to lodge him, feed him, provide him with fire, light, and service for £1 a week. The balance of £10 or £12 does not represent a very rich emolument even upon fifty boys, especially as boarding-houses are not always full; epidemics occur, and the extra responsibility of boarding involves extra charges, which are not lodging-house charges, but necessitated by the position which the boarding-house master has forced upon him: he is not only a lodging-house keeper, but a parent, and, in fact, a parent with anxieties which few parents ever feel.

Nor is the case of the private proprietary schools any better. They have a tendency, largely fostered by mutual competition, to run to bricks and mortar and playgrounds. The head-master alone makes any considerable income, and that income is rendered increasingly precarious by the fact that every year more men leave the underpaid public schools to speculate in private schools; while the assistant masters, unless they happen to be provided with capital, have no prospect of advancement. And worse than this, a man may work till he is past middle age in a preparatory school faithfully and well: his labour may have helped to build up the edifice; and on the death or retirement of his chief, he may, and often does, find himself deprived of his employment at an age when it is difficult to begin life afresh.

It is not that the head-masters of proprietary schools are a grasping or unkindly race; but they are compelled by the pressure of parents and mutual competition to spend very large sums upon buildings; they have only a short tenure relatively, and unless the money invested in the buildings is recovered before that tenure comes to an end, their heirs or successors are likely to find themselves in an awkward position.

Taking the whole profession from top to bottom, whether schools are public or private, it no longer offers sufficient inducements for a young man, who can get other work, who has sufficient ability to pass into the Civil Services, or to make him a good barrister or a good medical man. At the same time the increased supervision, the disguised nursemaid's work, which is demanded in boarding-schools, deters many men from becoming teachers.

Apart from pecuniary emoluments, young men are attracted to professions by the opportunity of continuing some favourite study or pursuit, or by certain amenities of life offered by the conditions of the profession. Formerly the teaching profession attracted students. A scholar saw an opportunity of continuing to be a scholar. The reputation of Eton and Winchester and some other schools was made by the fact that the masters were scholars, men of learning, not unfrequently men of wide learning, who travelled far beyond the limits of the dead languages to which their interests were supposed to be restricted. Now such men do not take school work; their ambition is to be lecturers or professors at the new universities, where they will be free from the restraints and irksome duties imposed by the necessities of boarding-schools. As the new universities encourage mathematics and science

rather than literature, it is in these branches of knowledge that the dearth of men who have taken brilliant degrees at the universities is being especially felt. There is, however, another class of pursuits which young men wish to continue; many of them drift into teaching from a wish to play cricket and football to the end of their existence. Here we find one of the many causes which contribute to the excessive athleticism of our private and public schools. A man who is teaching cricket or football even to small boys does not see that he is doing nursemaid's work; he thinks himself a pioneer in the great cause of the healthy body. If it were not for the athletics, even English parents would have been unable to force upon the schools that unwholesome system of perpetual supervision which is the bane of our private preparatory schools, and is in some degree extended to our public schools. There are many unpleasant and vulgar things in STALKY AND Co., but Mr. Kipling made a fair hit in his description of the athletic system.

If by a process of gradual elimination we allow the men of learning to drop out of the teaching profession, we need not concern ourselves to register teachers, or to insist that they shall pass examinations in pedagogics. Learning is, after all, the living force of education; even the Greeks, whose conceptions of education were purely athletic and moral to begin with, found that they could not do without learning.

The fact that there are a few schools in which the emoluments and other attractions will always be sufficient to induce first-class men to join their staffs, does not materially diminish the dangers of the paths on which we are running. The men of the middle of the nineteenth century, who wished to bring education within

the reach of large numbers, and therefore were concerned to keep the schools cheap, did not wish to popularise a sham or illiberal education; they wanted to diffuse through all classes that spirit which, in spite of many imperfections, made such schools as Eton a valuable asset to the nation. For a time they were successful, but as they omitted the question of ways and means, and as the pressure of the financial question is being increasingly felt, their creations are breaking down. The educational currency is being debased; the educational atmosphere has lost its brilliancy; the gerund-grinding spirit is even stronger than heretofore, for so many other things are now ground besides gerunds.

Is there a remedy? I question whether a complete remedy is to be found; certainly it is not to be found in appeals to the Government to do something, to find more money. There are what it is the fashion to call political reasons, which make it highly improbable that under our present political conditions anything should be done for learning. So far as the State is concerned, our dealings with education have hitherto shown a vulgarity of conception which is fatal to any real progress. We wish to be educated, in order that we may rise from the gutter to the Cabinet, that we may make more money, that we may beat the Germans in the application of scientific discoveries to industrial enterprise. We do not wish to be educated that we may become more efficient men and women in every way, with higher conceptions of our duties to one another and to all men.

There is, however, a possibility of palliation.

There are two classes of persons whose action has a direct influence

upon this question; governors and head-masters or proprietors of schools.

One of the many curses of education in England is the private character of the schools which we have elected to call public. Put before a head-master some scheme for the improvement of the profession in general, and as likely as not he will say to you with dignity and even severity: "*We* do not find that difficulty; such a course would be of no benefit to *us*; *our* parents do not demand such a thing." It is impossible to awaken his interest in any beyond what he conceives to be the needs of his own particular establishment. Similarly there is no sense of solidarity in the profession; the public schools group by themselves as far as possible, and do their best to establish a wholly unscientific frontier between themselves and the grammar-schools, while private schools are again a separate department.

It is this which gives an air of unreality to the proceedings of the Conference of Head-Masters and similar organisations. The assembled masters do not feel that they are members of one great profession, responsible for its welfare. Though they are the guardians of the profession, they refuse to accept the position; they prefer to think of themselves as head-masters of this, that, and the other school.

Governors of schools, again, who officially at any rate have more of the character of trustees of education even than head-masters, are equally blind to the interests of the profession; to them the erection of buildings and the cutting down of salaries are the very essence of sound educational finance. Head-masters and governors alike could do something to improve salaries.

Considerable alleviation could be given to the case of the assistant

masters in private preparatory schools, could a sufficient number of the leading schools be formed into a syndicate or company; so that the head-masters would become the salaried officers of a permanent institution, and it would no longer be necessary for an experienced assistant to have a large capital to enable him to succeed his chief. The effects of competition may force some such step upon the proprietors.

Questions of method and of subjects have in fact become of subordinate importance; so far as those questions are capable of being settled, they are settled; the battle over them has raged for more than two thousand years, and will continue to rage so long as there is any vitality in education.

Men and women are more important than bricks and mortar, and the spirit of learning than the perfection of methods of instruction. It is no idle fancy of mine that the emoluments and conditions of the teaching profession are no longer likely to attract the men who have it in them to be the best teachers; in addition to my own private researches, I have the authority of the Blue-Book issued by the Royal Commission, from which I have already quoted.

There is yet another class of

persons who can help,—the parents. School-fees should be and could be raised in the vast majority of schools in which the salary-fund is inadequate. Five pounds a year does not make much difference to the average parent; yet it makes a vast difference to the salary-fund of a school of three hundred boys. I am almost inclined to believe that if parents really knew the conditions under which instruction and even more than parental care are given to their children, mere shame would prevent them from accepting the doubtful blessing of low fees. But they do not know, and they cannot know.

What I have said applies to girls' schools, no less than to boys' schools: women in fact require protection from their own zeal even more than men; and in the long run the nation will suffer by its neglect of the underpayment of teachers of both sexes. We are all ready enough to admit that an underpaid and overworked teacher cannot be efficient, and equally ready to write by the next post to tell Dr. Briggs that, as we shall be sending little Billy to join little Tommy at his school after Christmas, we hope that, as there will now be two of them, he may see his way to make a reduction in the fees.

J. C. TARVER.

THE POETIC ASPECT OF LIFE.

STENDHAL, in the chapel of the Grande Chartreuse at prime, while tremendous peals of thunder every now and then broke the intense stillness of the meditation, wished that he knew nothing of electricity or of Franklin. He would fain have heard in that voice the voice of God,—and he could not. And to-day in like manner there are some who find themselves unable to enjoy what by almost universal consent is considered noble in poetry, painting, and sculpture. They can only admire anatomic truth in a figure, photographic accuracy in a landscape, scientific precision in a poem; that is to say, they can only sympathise with the mechanical side of art, and are devoid of perception for that *beyond* which may be considered, not unduly, of its essence. For many years past, science has been demonstrating the unity of all natural processes, the absence of all discoverable traces of anything resembling the human intelligence to govern the order of the universe as it is known to us, the complete insignificance of human existence itself, its frailty, its inevitable end. Indeed it is leading us to that theory of the universe which the Buddhists conceived under the impersonification of Maya,—

That incarnate Lie,
Who mocks at whoso walks and weeps
on earth,
A vision fertilised which she hath
dreamed,
Ere yet Time was, in forms innumerable—

that in fact all we hear and see and feel consists of "magic shadow-shapes that come and go" upon the screen

of conscious intellect. And this has operated in certain minds, as it did in Stendhal's, in leading them to reject as meaningless the poetic symbolism of the past without giving them any new symbolism in return.

Such men are materialists, not only in philosophy, but also in sentiment, and, while materialism as a theory is compatible with any attitude towards life,—although perhaps we must cross the Channel for a purely materialist poet, such as Baudelaire—materialism as a sentiment is an irreconcilable antagonist of poetic feeling. Those who not only think but feel themselves to be dust, have but scanty sympathy with that exaltation which seems an essential feature of poetic emotion. But these apart, it seems that the products of the poetic imagination,—and by this I do not mean necessarily verse, nor all works written in metrical form—appeal to a more appreciative, perhaps to a wider, audience than of old. Current ontological speculations form, surely, a more consciously unsatisfactory explanation of the universe than any which have preceded them, though at the same time they may be truer, in accordance with a more extensive human experience. And this conscious dissatisfaction, which so many feel in respect of what to our modern minds seems the only possible solution of the riddle, throws men all the more willingly into that asylum which poets have prepared for them. What though life be only a bye-product of cosmic change? All the more necessary, then, to fashion it as tolerably as may be. Absolute truth is far

beyond our reach; but we can at least seek to understand those old formulas which once had enough vitality for men to live by and to die for.

Change is the nursery
Of music, life, joy, and eternity,

wrote Donne, and, following his counsel, we may make up for what we must lose in sincerity of emotion by variety and width of experience. And in this wise science has proved also, not the enemy, but the friend of poetry, and, in showing the infinite mutations of the forms of life, has shown too the mutations of the spirit, the slow awakening of Psyche, in such manner as to render possible the imaginative re-creation of psychical conditions which passed away centuries ago.

It is especially in such dilettantism of sentiment, perhaps, that modern poetic taste tends to show itself, rather than in any new and great poetic creation. It may well be that the time is not yet ripe for the development of a new poetic symbolism to replace older forms, to express as entirely as may be the later developments of human thought. But in any case, it can hardly be said that modern interest in poetry, that modern need for poetic expression, is less than it was. Nay rather, the conditions which demand poetic expression are undoubtedly becoming wider-spread with the increase of a leisured class of men acutely self-conscious, infected with the malady of thought. And thus, to analyse the poetic stand-point is to indicate the attitude of many to the facts of life as presented to them.

But we must beware of confusing this poetic attitude towards life with that which is displayed in many verses. There are many poems which

are anything but poetical, and many men have won fame by verse,—I do not mean to depreciate their work, but I cannot call it poetry without considerable confusion of language—which is inspired by a spirit other than poetical. Which may be the better, the truer, I cannot attempt to decide; all that I shall endeavour to accomplish is to indicate, to illustrate, their difference as variant modes of considering the phenomena of life.

Many of us at times feel an irresistible desire to escape from the almost oppressive atmosphere of ordinary existence, to wander, as it were, away from the houses and merry, thoughtless people, along the sea shore, until the noise of the crowd becomes no more than a faint, suggestive murmur, and then, as darkness slowly veils land and sea till each stretches out seemingly illimitable, we turn and look back upon the lights that stud the promenade, and listen, now to the distant voices that sounded so shrill and unmusical near at hand, now to the deeper murmur of the waves half-breaking on the beach. At such moments one seems to stand mid-way between the known, material world and another unexplored, mysterious world of dreams, that might contain so much of peace and joy, while the mere consciousness of its presence helps to reconcile one to the more violent reality. Sooner or later, we are all drawn back into the throng, sometimes with a renewed sense of protection as the lights grow brighter, sometimes with profound regret as our return displays the unloveliness of things afresh. And yet, different as each of these sensations is, each is true enough from its particular stand-point, whatever those may say who view the world from a single angle. In truth, their seeming falsities are due to a disregard of proper perspective. After all, sentient

life consists merely in a succession of sensations produced by the stimulations which we are constantly receiving from without. The reality of these sensations, of our emotions, is just the one fact over which even metaphysics are powerless to cast a doubt. Their causes may be hidden, undiscoverable, only to be vaguely guessed at from their effects; but that we feel is a point on which we cannot deceive even ourselves. So, whether life makes us glad or sorry, whether we feel it to be something noble or base, whether we delight to stand in the midst of it and watch it in its most trivial details, or to view it from a distance and try to catch its general significance, our sensations all remain equally true and equally trustworthy, so long as we do not attempt to apply the conclusions drawn from one aspect of life to the life which is perceived from another point of view.

In the treatment of life in literature, it is possible to distinguish two absolutely diverse tendencies of thought, which yet are often found in close union with one another,—the positive and the poetic views of life, we may call them for lack of any more definite terms. These positive and poetic elements are found in varying degrees in nearly every mind, and hence, no doubt, arise many of those inconsistencies in the conduct of life to which we are all liable. For "*Here dwelleth Happiness (hic habitat felicitas)*" is a motto inscribed over many doors, over the door of Selfishness as over that of Self-renunciation, over the dwellings of Society and Solitude, upon the lintels of Action and of Thought; and beforehand none may certainly tell which of all these invitations is especially addressed to him. Often-times he accepts one too late, another too early. So too in art, the writer's

attitude towards life is often complicated, and its determination depends upon his ideals, upon his conception of the beautiful. But all these ideals may be classified according as they approach more or less nearly to those of two cardinal types of mind, the positive and the poetic.

The positive type of mind is that which tends to perceive complete beauty in the immediate facts of life as they are presented to it. It is, in a sense, optimistic, in so far as it holds that everything is for the best, in other words, that nothing really matters very much. It derives the keenest delight from the mere study of social existence, with the microscope, as it were. It transcribes what it sees, aiming at reproduction rather than judgment, and even endeavours to avoid, so far as may be, the isolation of the fragment it is engaged upon,—an isolation which inevitably differentiates our appreciations of the same phenomena in art and life — by linking many volumes into one great work, such as Balzac's *COMÉDIE HUMAINE*, or Zola's *LES ROUGON-MACQUART*. Such works impress us with the same indeterminateness, the same universality, as we perceive almost despairingly in the life which surrounds us. These writers, as I have said, aim at reproducing the facts of life, especially such of its physical details as have a particular psychological value. They are, as Balzac professed himself to be, naturalists of society,—*docteurs des sciences sociales*—whose main business lies in analysing certain widely spread social types. We are not without such novelists in England; but, for an example of this method carried out on a large scale to its logical conclusion, we must turn to Zola. In his works we find described with startling detail and fidelity the physical life of the great crowds met

together in Paris, the mysterious, the wonderful. We can follow the daily existence of the many who swarm in its streets, who all day throng the business-houses, and all the evening the boulevards, in the monotony, the greyness, the commonness of their existence. The doings of the human ant-hill are laid before us by one who has studied it curiously, carefully, profoundly, and who, when he was writing *NANA* or *LE VENTRE DE PARIS*, did not regard what he was describing with anything but the interest of the observer. This is essentially the attitude of positive spirits. They are neither depressed nor exalted by the phenomena of human life. It is something which the nature of things has produced, something of no particular significance, but still something of the highest interest to our ephemeral race, because we are a moment of its development.

Their interest is, then, immediate, one that resides in the direct reactions which the surrounding life produces in them. They are Epicureans, who would obtain their knowledge at first-hand, who reckon untrustworthy all knowledge of derived sensation; they would say with Stendhal that we do not know enough about the court of Richelieu to write a true account of it. And thus, for them life's interest lies in the present. The past and the future are of little moment to them,—the past because it is no longer, the future because it is not yet; neither being subject to that immediate, physical experience which is their dominant necessity, their decisive criterion. But what results when the whole range of physical experiences has been exhausted—*quand on a dépensé sa jeunesse en expériences?* Little but an utter weariness of this present, fulfilling the words of the author of Ecclesi-

astes: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth. . . . but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." It was in his maturer years that Solomon wrote *vanitas vanitatis*, and the hearts of many corroborate his evidence. And thus it comes to pass that the positive spirit, when it has weighed the world and found it wanting, tends to be transmuted into the poetical spirit. In other words, the man who first looks on life from the positive point of view is very apt to change his position and look on it from the poetical. Weary of the present, he seeks to set himself at a distance from it, in the future or the past.

To some it may seem little less than a paradox that a man should grow more poetical with years. Youth is commonly considered as the especial season of the flower of poetry. Yet, if we consider it, this youthful poetry really concerns itself with the *here* and *now* which are so entirely absorbing to positive minds; and the transition from the positive to the poetical outlook upon life is really very natural, very analogous to other natural processes. The physiologist traces the growth of the race in the growth of a single individual of it from the earliest protoplasmic germ to the complexity of the mature animal. So too the psychologist may trace the development of the mind; the child and the savage furnish us with an example which has become trite, and, in like manner, the individual, in a society no longer primitive, shows, in his development from youth to manhood, the parallel change through which that society has passed.

The change lies, I think, in a tendency to substitute intellectual for physical emotion. Man passes from the realm of sense to the realm of imagination, and demands from the latter an effect analogous to that

which we experience in watching a crowd with its brilliant patches of colour, and in listening to its hoarse murmur from afar. He seeks the enchantment of distance, as well in the moral world as in the material; and it is only in this manner that a man of poetic imagination (whether it were developed naturally from the first, or whether it came as a refuge from an embittering experience of actual life) succeeds, and that not always, in reconciling himself with the evils of every social order. Birth into the world places us, whether we will or no, amidst the crowd; and this,—straightway for the poet, sooner or later for the Epicurean who cares to think—suffices to reveal the insufficiency of life. Even the poet's knowledge is often purchased at the cost of suffering, though that may be an anguish felt for others, for the feebleness and blindness with which they strive to mould their lives. Ulysses's case may well be his. Nothing but the scent of blood suffices to lure up the shades of past and future. He may only hold converse with them, the select,—

Lonely antagonists of destiny
Who went down scornful before many
spears—

when blood has been poured into the trench which severs the worlds of flesh and spirit. His oblation is the offering of present grief. Much published poetry would seem to have something, as it were, ghoulish about it, as if the poet had torn open the tomb of the past under the necessity of feeding his body and fame, before he could reveal to others how he has joyed or suffered, even in imagination, like Rosetti desecrating his wife's grave to take from between her mouldering fingers that only copy of his verses which he had thought to bury

everlastingly. This is what a certain French poet cries to his audience:

Promène qui voudra son cœur ensan-
glanté
Sur ton pavé cynique, ô plèbe carnas-
sière !
Pour mettre un feu stérile en ton oeil
hébété,
Pour mendier ton rire ou ta pitié gros-
sière,
Déchire qui voudra la robe de lumière
De la pudeur divine et de la volupté !

The freshness of the dream has been tarnished by its communication to the world, and the necessity of its communication must, to some minds, be full of a singular bitterness.

Perhaps M. Maeterlinck may be taken as representing the poetic attitude towards life very completely; I do not mean in the vagaries of his mysticism, which is largely a personal accident effected by the influence of heredity, of race, but in the broad generality of his verdict on existence. It charms him only when set apart in some dim antiquity, surrounded on the one side by the whisperings of immemorial forests, and on the other by the voices of the unchanging sea. His lovers, Pelleas and Mélissande, or Aglavaine and Selysette, separated from the world by misty distance, and yet akin to us by the common relationship of sorrow, live phantom-like amid such sounds, attuned to them in a harmony that almost robs pain of its bitterness, leaving it only sad and pitiful. Or when he would describe the whole life of man, here too his symbols have the same strange air of distance, like the visions of one who sees in a glass darkly. He chooses a company of aged men and women with an infant in their midst who alone of them all has the sense of sight, and who alone of them all has not the power of speech and thought. They live, it may be remembered, in a lonely island, whose

every part is penetrated by the angry breaking of the sea, even in the deepest recesses of its forest, and they have been led out of their hospice by the old priest who tends them for one last walk before the setting-in of winter. He has brought them far, into the very middle of the forest, and, while they have all sat down to rest before the long return, he has died. They speak to him, and, for a while, conjecture from his silence that he has fallen asleep, or wandered away among the trees. But at last, as the evening air grows chill with falling snow, they understand the truth, and, after complaints,—how pathetic in their uselessness!—the forest stillness is broken only by the sobbing of the child and the distant thundering of the surf against the cliffs. Can human thought discover a symbol to express more poignantly the dying agony of a civilisation that has grown up in the trust of a religion, to find in its old age that it can believe no longer, than this circle of the aged blind seated around the corpse of their priest and protector?

In such works, then, as I have referred to, we find two methods of regarding human life, each the antithesis of the other; the one looking close at life, examining even its most secret places without sorrow and without disapproval, finding a justification for all in the single fact of existence; the other, finding the aspect of human life near at hand jarring, unendurable, requiring its hard, crude outlines to be softened by the blue mist of distance, and filling in the hidden details more harmoniously with itself. And yet, essentially opposed as these two views of life may seem, it is impossible to say that either is the truer of that mysterious causal substance which lies behind the appearance of things.

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They differ just as the re-actions of some chemical on different substances. We saw that the positive spirit tends to live in the present, the poetic in the past and future. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the one occupies that infinitely little point of time which is the present in observing the sensations which arise from what is without him, while the other fills it with memories and forecasts of these sensations; the one observes, the other imagines. And the question which must be answered in comparing their relative truth is this: is the imagination a further obscuring medium, or is it as a second lens correcting the distortions of the first? The only answer to the question lies in the accomplishment of the eternally fruitless quest of the absolute.

But leaving aside such vexed questions of metaphysics, the dreams of Zola and of M. Maeterlinck (for we must remember that each is but a dreamer, in company with all of us who look upon the world) at all events spring from the manner in which the world without affects them; they represent emotional truth to each of them, and therefore to each of us in proportion as our spirits resemble theirs, according as in our changing moods we are nearer to the one or to the other. For however completely the poet may appear to succeed in detaching himself from the physical sensations of the moment, the present itself can only be annihilated by death. The great difference between his and more positive minds is that the former complicates these physical sensations of the moment by the superinduction of the intellectual sensations of past and future, taking a more comprehensive view of human existence. He is very conscious of that mysterious *beyond*, that which has ceased to be and that

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which still shall be, encircling the tiny span that life illuminates. Surely the Norseman conceived of life very truly as the Tree Ygdrasil, whose roots are buried deep within the earth, whose branches are lost amid low-hanging gloom, whose trunk runs with hidden, silent sap. This great and massive trunk, the present, is not the only certainty. Roots and branches are equally inevitable, although, by us, they may only be inferred; and are not these the more able to fill us with profound emotion, since we have no immediate experience of them? *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*.

And thus when Lamartine writes,

Temps jaloux, se peut-il que ces moments d'ivresse,
Où l'amour à longs flots nous verse le bonheur,
S'envolent loin de nous de la même vitesse

Que les jours de malheur?

or when Mrs. Browning writes

I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life. And, if
God choose,
I shall but love thee better after
death,—

they are striking the dominant note of the poetic, as opposed to the positive, melody. Or again, we have a complete example of the poetic emotion arising from this idea of the indissoluble unity of life in Robert Browning's *EVELYN HOPE*. The lover, standing beside the corpse of the girl whom he loved, does not dwell on the terrible physical fact thus presented to him. He recalls her young, exquisite, graceful beauty; the sweetness and peace of her short life; her latest acts, full of pathos in their triviality. And at last he shuts a leaf within her fingers; she will "wake, and remember, and under-

stand,"—a thought so deeply significant as to reveal the profoundest depth of human agony.

The positive and poetic aspects of life are, in reality, not so much contradictory as complementary. Without the positive experience, the poetic imagination has nothing to work upon; without the poetic imagination, the positive experience lacks an interpreter, lacks meaning. And thus it comes to pass that the positive is always tending to convert itself into the poetic. This is strikingly exemplified if we consider the difference between a poet's earlier and later work, the earlier being commonly little more than the reproduction of moments of intense emotion,—the difference, for example, between *VENUS* and *ADONIS* and *THE TEMPEST*, between *THE GIAOUR* and *DON JUAN*, between *HERNANI* and *LA LÉGENDE DES SIÈCLES*. Zola himself is an interesting instance of the same tendency. I have already quoted his earlier works as typical examples of the positive attitude, yet in his last years, the author of the epic of mud,—*l'épopée fangeuse*,—began to dream of the regeneration of society, and wrote his *Four Gospels*, *Les Quatres Évangiles*. His pupil, M. Huysmans, has undergone a still more extraordinary transformation, in so far as his line of modification forms a much sharper curve.

In truth, either principle is rarely, if ever, found alone. If we consider any mental state, it will appear, in ultimate analysis, to consist of an inextricably tangled union of both, sometimes so evenly distributed as to form the warp and woof, as it were, of consciousness. When we stand, perhaps, in a cathedral such as that of Chester, which hardly produces as great a positive effect, with its somewhat severe lines of architecture, as a more elaborate building would, our

minds are by no means entirely full of the visible structure. Of course the feeling of size and height, are very present with us, as well as the bold outline of light and shadow. But beyond these, we look westward down the nave, and the air aloft is stained, made visible, one might say, by the clerestory lights,—it might be the incense-wreaths of eternal prayer hanging over us. We look towards the high altar, and strive to pierce the dim mysteriousness of the Lady Chapel, in which the Divine Conception might be thought to brood. We recall the splendour of the ancient services, and inevitably it affects our appreciation of the simpler offices men say there now. And yet another thought besieges us very importunately,—how that one day these massive arches will lie in broken ruin, like those of many another once majestic temple, perchance more impressive in their vanished grandeur than when the monks of St. Werburgh celebrated mass on the festivals of Holy Church.

So perhaps we shall not err in ascribing to the poetic view of life, which cannot altogether avoid something of positive observation, a breadth and completeness, which the positive seems to lack. Indeed this sense of the *beyond* possesses a wonderful faculty for modifying the sensations of the present. Dante wrote,

Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria,—

And the sorrow's crown of sorrows

is remembering happier things, in Tennyson's paraphrase. Dante might have added with equal truth that the one solace for misery was to look forward towards its end. *Carpe diem* may be the motto alike of positive and poetic minds, but while positive epicureanism takes what the world lays ready to its hand, poetic thought,—thought the revealer, if not the creator of the universe, so far as we at least are concerned—fills the fleeting and yet eternal present with impassioned imagery of past and future; its breadth saves it from the characteristics of frivolity, of insignificance. And thus this poetic aspect of life, at which the practical are wont to sneer, seems in reality to offer a powerful sedative for the anguish of life, whose history only reveals man's unceasing effort to become other than he is,—an effort whose utmost success never seems to bring the hoped-for peace. And since the essential feature of this aspect is a comparative completeness, it tends to be that which commends itself to minds impelled by the necessity of their nature to take the broadest view of life, although perhaps—who can tell?—it may be the most erroneous. But at the same time, such minds approach most nearly to that conception which Sir Thomas Browne has thus expressed, "What to us is past or still to come, to His Eternity is present,"—minds in no metaphorical sense divine, for they are the terrestrial originals of this human ideal of the Infinite conceived as Thought.

H. HERBERT DODWELL.

THE PLACE OF THE GREAT DEAD

(A LEGEND OF ADAM'S PEAK.)

It was the coldest morning I ever remember to have known in Ceylon. During the night the wind had risen to a gale, which, roaring through the trees, blew cold and damp as a Channel-fog through and under my tent, chilling me to the bone. I rose stiff in every joint, and at half-past six started with my guide up the bed of the stream that flows west from the neck of Adam's Peak. Walking up the bed was hard work enough, but it was easier than pushing through the tangled bamboo which forms the main undergrowth in those parts. We reached the source of the stream at about nine o'clock, and the summit of the ridge an hour later. Here we struck into a well-beaten elephant-path, which saved us for a time from the effort of forcing our way through the jungle.

Podisingo, the guide, told me that there was a cave close below us where he had sometimes slept while out gathering wild honey; as he said there was water near, I decided to stop there for breakfast and a short rest.

The cave was formed by a huge overhanging mass of rock supported by two smaller blocks; between these was a dry hollow, the floor of which seemed to have been roughly levelled. To reach it we had to squeeze between two great boulders, fallen from the hill above; and a couple of young palm trees near the mouth of the cave testified to the fact that elephants could not reach the spot, for, as the Singalese know well, these

palms are an elephant's favourite food.

From the mouth of the cave we could see the wind-driven mist tower when it struck the Peak, and shoot upwards like steam from an engine. Far below, to the south-east, spread the forest-covered hills, looking like a crumpled dark green carpet. I scanned them keenly through my glasses, and finally fixed on a deep little valley as the place to explore. This valley, which must have been three or four miles away, looked as though it were enclosed on every side, but there must have been an outlet or the monsoon rains would have formed a lake. Somehow the place attracted me, and I determined to start at once to explore it. We soon found an elephant-path that seemed to lead in the right direction, and we came across some fresh tracks. This reminded me of the Singalese legend about the place where all the elephants come to die; it is said to be somewhere in the wilderness of the Peak, but nobody knows the exact spot. I asked my guide if he had heard the story, and, after a moment's pause, he said he would tell me all he knew. First cautioning me not to refer to elephants by name as we were doubtless near many of them, and himself speaking of them as the Great Ones, he began.

First of all, a man was shown the place by a god, on the express condition that he would never reveal the secret; but being a fool he told a friend, and the god found out and

killed the traitor. But the deed was done; the friend who knew escaped the angry god and became appointed chief purveyor of ivory to the King of Anuradhapura. For many years this man amassed wealth, but, except for his brothers and sons, none knew whence the ivory came. Thus the secret was kept in the family for several hundred years, being passed from father to son, until a dire plague of smallpox fell on the village where those who knew lived, and all of them save one died; he was left alive indeed, but blind.

Still, he said there were certain marks on the stones which had been cut by his grandfather, and that sooner than the secret should be wholly lost, he would impart it to his sister's four sons. They were to lead him to a certain spot where he could show them a sign in the rock that would tell them exactly in which direction to go. He started with the four men, and none of them were ever seen again. Some said the four had killed him and fled; but why should they fly? Others said that they were all killed by the Great Ones. But the truth was never known, and the secret was never re-discovered.

My guide now lowered his voice and went on to tell how, more than ten years ago, he had sat on a rock not far from where we now were, and picking idly at the moss had found an elephant carved on the stone beneath. The elephant was depicted in a life-like attitude, running, with his trunk stretched out in front of him; and he, Podisingo, thought it possible that this was one of the rock-cut signs that had served as a pointer to those in the secret. He had searched for days to find another sign, but without success. He had never told his secret before, but my asking him about the legend had so far revived the old excitement that he brought it all out

now, and offered to show me the carving. I cannot say I had any expectation of finding the Place of the Dead, but I was very anxious to see the sign and form my own conclusions on it.

It had become overgrown with moss, and we spent upwards of two hours in scraping all the likely-looking stones round about. At last Podisingo found it, and called to me. The figure was a remarkably well executed one of an elephant going at top speed. In Anuradhapura, on the moonstone of the ruin known as the Queen's Palace, there is a similar figure, but I think this one was even better finished. The carving was in sunk relief and measured nine inches and a half from the tip of the trunk to the tip of the tail. Suddenly an idea struck me, and I looked to see if the trunk pointed towards any striking landmark. Sure enough it pointed to a conical hill topped with a curiously shaped mass of gneiss, which looked like a ruined tower. I remembered having noticed this hill from the cave while examining the narrow valley; but now the valley was no more to be seen, some ridge or hill hiding it completely from sight.

I suppose that all human beings have the instinct of gambling in them. Certainly both Podisingo and I must have; for although we could see that it was going to rain, and that the night would be bitterly cold, although we had no food nor change, and could not even be sure of finding a cave to sleep in, above all having not the remotest idea whether the carving had any real significance, yet we were both as keen as possible to press on and see what there was on that conical hill. We started at once and reached the foot of the hill at about four o'clock in the afternoon; and as we reached it the rain began to fall heavily. The hill was covered

with dense bamboo undergrowth, but we had no difficulty in reaching the summit for the place was pierced with innumerable elephant-paths, all of which led upwards until they met on a large slab rock, immediately under the tower-like mass of gneiss we had seen from so far away.

Now we felt entirely at a loss, for paths led in every direction with never a sign to show which was the right one. High and low we searched and were on the point of giving it up when it struck Podisingo to climb the gneiss rock. This was no easy thing to do and he took some time over the job. While he was climbing, I looked down for my valley, but though I could have sworn that it was near this hill, I could not see it anywhere.

Then Podisingo shouted and danced for glee on the top of the rock. "The Great One's picture is here also," he cried. In a couple of minutes I was up beside him. Sure enough an exact replica of the first elephant was cut, not on the top, but on the sloping side of the rock; and its trunk pointed straight down into my valley, which lay directly below us, hidden from where I had stood by this very rock we were on.

Down the steep side we scrambled in the pouring rain, down into the valley. Once there we decided to search for some shelter for the night, for it was growing dusk early owing to the dense clouds gathering above us.

Curiously enough, our temporarily abandoning the search for the Place of The Dead proved the way of finding it,—for it was a cave. Up to its mouth a long slope of rock was polished smooth by the thousands of feet that had made their last journey along it, so smooth that it was hard for me in boots to keep my foot-hold. Black as pitch was the mouth of the

cave, black and forbidding as the entrance to a vault. Somehow neither of us seemed to have any doubt as to the identity of the place; and a feeling of awe, of smallness and insignificance crept into my soul, and I think into that of the Singalese too.

We passed the entrance and I struck a match; but its flickering light only showed a vast illimitable blackness beyond. We went in a little way, and crouching against the rocks waited for the dawn.

The rain ceased and the wind rose higher and higher, howling and sighing in the mouth of the cavern. As our eyes grew accustomed to the darkness a faint luminous glow could be seen within, which rose I knew from the slowly decaying bones. The vague glimmer crept into my soul and I felt fear, cold fear, grip my very heart. The wind increased to a gale, and the moon rose. Far away, between two hills, the Peak towered aloft like a sentinel of the dead. The humming of the streams, like a thousand swarms of bees, could be heard between the gusts of wind.

The gale grew fiercer, and occasionally the clash of bells on the summit of the Peak was borne on the wings of the wind. Tolling for a funeral, the streams weeping for a death,—and we two little men felt strangely lost.

There was a pause; and then with a sigh, a great dark form toiled up the rocky steep. It passed and lay wearily down just beyond us in the cave. Again it sighed,—so sad a sigh! I felt all the sorrow and pity in me go out to this huge dying beast. It seemed a sacrilege to be at such a funeral.

The wind burst forth again, shaking the rocks in its fury, and the valley seemed filled with dark moaning forms. The Singalese could bear the strain no longer, and taking a dose of opium

to steady his nerves, began to croon a low sad song. This seemed to attract the attention of the dying elephant to us, for he rose slowly to his feet, and we could see him watching us as he swayed slowly from side to side. Like some great tower he stood and then sank slowly down,—down until he lay just at the edge of the bones, which, by the light of the moon, we could now see piled in the cave behind, heap beyond heap, until all was lost in darkness. The wind dropped, and the stillness was awful. A dank chill smell was in the air, and the whole place reeked of death.

The Singalese and I could bear it no longer. The elephant lay quite still, and we rose and fled into the night. As we crossed the little valley we could see that the ground was pitted with elephant-tracks, made by the feet of the mourners who had brought their brother there to die.

When we reached camp next morning, we said that we had lost our way, and no one disbelieved us.

We both swore never to show to anybody the place we had discovered,—the Place of the Great Dead. I shall keep my promise, and I think the other man will keep his.

J. S.

THE WAR COMMISSION—AND AFTER!

II. MILITARY RESPONSIBILITY.

UPON receiving the news of the repulse at Colenso, the Government set itself forthwith to increase the force in South Africa to thrice the strength originally appointed; and simultaneously it selected Lord Roberts to supersede General Buller in the supreme command. The choice was of course a popular one; though to some people the fact that Lord Wolseley knew South Africa well, both as a general and an administrator, might have suggested him as the more suitable man for the place. It was at any rate unfortunate that Lord Roberts's military experience should have been practically confined exclusively to the East Indies, and that consequently he had never seen a British colony; for he was thus necessarily ignorant of the meaning of a new country.

Meanwhile the situation was steadily improving. French and Gatacre were more than holding their own on the Central and Eastern railways, and General Buller, on the very morning after the battle of Colenso, had suggested to Lord Methuen the means of manœuvring Cronje out of his position at Magersfontein by laying a few miles of railway to his own right flank. This suggestion he presently expanded into a new plan of campaign, namely an advance upon Bloemfontein by Jacobsdal, the army laying down a railway for the whole distance as it went. Colonel Girouard certified that the proposed line to Jacobsdal could be constructed at the probable rate of a mile a day without

interference with the traffic for the supply of the forces. Lord Roberts, however, did not favour the proposal; and the line to Bloemfontein was never made, neither by him nor later by Lord Kitchener. Yet the value of direct railway communication between Kimberley and Bloemfontein would have been very great, particularly in the later stages of the war, for it would have saved the long round by Naauport and De Aar, at least two hundred miles, in transferring troops and stores from the Central to the Western Railway. This and other advantages would surely have made it well worth the cost of construction.

Previous to his arrival at Cape Town Lord Roberts had given no inkling of his intentions except by one message, which implied his adherence to the original plan of campaign, and by an expression of his wish that the *status quo* should if possible be maintained. The troops as they arrived were therefore concentrated in Cape Colony, and the transport-animals stationed, as well as grazing and other considerations would permit, along the three lines of railway.

This distribution of the transport was unfortunate, since Lord Roberts complained of it as having delayed his own operations; but it is difficult to see how the Director of Transport can be blamed for it, seeing that he had been led to expect no deviation from the original plan of campaign. Possibly the Government had left the new Commander-in-Chief, like his

predecessor, to gather his information from the newspapers, so that he had no clear idea what the original plan of campaign might be. However that may be, Lord Roberts arrived with Lord Kitchener at Cape Town on January 10th, 1900, and on the following day gave orders for the re-organisation of the transport.

No organised transport corps existed when I arrived in South Africa [he wrote in his despatch of February 6th, 1900]. Some thousands of mules had been collected and a number of ox and mule-waggons had been purchased; but what is known as the regimental system had been adopted, which consists in providing each unit with sufficient transport for its baggage, ammunition, and two or three days' supplies. . . . This system is quite unsuitable for extensive operations in a district where no food and scarcely any forage can be procured. . . . It is moreover a very extravagant system, for during a campaign every corps is not required to be on the move. A certain number have to garrison important points and guard lines of communication, and for these transport is not needed. On the regimental system the transport attached to such corps would remain with them and would therefore not be available for general purposes, or in the event of its being taken from them no one would be responsible for its supervision.

Lord Roberts must have been strangely misinformed or uninformed; for there was an organised transport and supply corps when he arrived in South Africa, namely the Army Service Corps, which by his own admission did admirable work. Transport corps as distinct from supply corps have been tried repeatedly during past centuries and found wanting, as can be demonstrated conclusively by our past military history.

Next, though it is but a small matter, it is not the fact that a number of ox-waggons had been purchased. They had been hired, and hired on such terms as provided them *ipso facto*

with organisation. Next it would appear that Lord Roberts allowed himself to be misled by the words *regimental system*,—a term which seems to have been very loosely used, possibly because it was misunderstood, by the War Commission. The system should really have been called the War Office System, which, though it has been somewhat obscured by technical language, is in reality very simple. An army is simply a moving population, and is fed upon much the same principle as a stationary one. We all of us keep, roughly speaking, one to two days' supplies in our houses, or, as we may say, in our store-rooms. So too an army has what may be called rolling store-rooms to carry from one to two days' supplies. These are organised by regiments and, together with certain fighting equipment, constitute what is called regimental transport. We require daily replenishment of our supplies. So does an army; and accordingly it is provided with a replenishing transport, to carry one to two days' supplies. This replenishing transport is organised, broadly speaking, by brigades and is called the supply-column; its duties being analogous to those of the butcher's, baker's, and grocer's carts which daily run backward and forward between the shops and our own doors. But these carts must have depôts or warehouses from which to bring the supplies to our doors; so too must an army have rolling magazines. These are called the supply-park, and are organised to carry at least three days' supplies, though they may be increased to carry as many more supplies as are needed. This was the system upon which the transport had been organised in South Africa. Every detail of the transport had been carefully adjusted to the detail of fighting men for which it was required, so that if

detachments of men were separated from their units, they could be accompanied almost automatically by their proportion of waggons. Elaborate tables had been prepared for the guidance of all concerned ; all waggons had been marked, all teams sorted, all drivers furnished with badges ; but nevertheless it was specially laid down that no transport was inalienably attached to any unit, but that all was at the disposal of the general in command. The system was in full working order when Lord Roberts arrived in South Africa ; every unit was fitted with its full proportion of transport, employing in all some 15,000 mules and 16,000 oxen, apart from a considerable number held in reserve ; and all men, especially the troops at the front, were loud in its praise.

All this Lord Roberts, demonstrably without knowledge or enquiry, swept away within twenty-four hours of his arrival at Cape Town. I say, demonstrably, because although in March, 1901, he signed a report describing the system which he displaced, his evidence before the War Commission shows that even in December, 1902, his knowledge of it was as vague as it had been in February, 1900. He handed in this report of March 25th, 1901, as evidence before the Commission, and declared for the second time that he had found nothing prepared at Cape Town beyond regimental transport, which was quite unequal to the demands of war.

Chairman. In addition to the regimental transport proper is there not also under the old system a supply-column and a supply-park ?—No, I do not think so.

Nothing at all ?—I think all they had arranged for was two days' supply, and they had no idea of going beyond the line of railway, I think.

Was that the organisation of the British Army at the time ?—I think so. I think

that is how I began my report . . . (here he read the opening sentences of his report of March 25th, 1901).

Yes, but if you look a few lines lower down, with regimental transport, "there are also supply-columns for each brigade . . . "carrying one day's supply of food and forage and a supply-park for each Army Corps" ?—Yes, one day's supplies.

"And a supply-park for each Army Corps calculated to carry three days' supplies of food and forage for the troops composing the Army Corps" ?—Yes, that would be four days' supply.

Yet surely on adding two days' supply in the regimental transport to two in the replenishing transport and three in the supply-park, the total should be seven ; and, if to this figure be added one day's supply carried by the men, the result, according to the accepted rules of arithmetic, declares itself to be a total of eight days' supply. But it is far less surprising that Lord Roberts should have made a slip in mental calculation, than that both on taking command of the army in the field and after holding for twelve months the command-in-chief at home, he should have been ignorant of the system of transport and supply which had been appointed by regulation.

As to the new system, which he introduced, it must suffice to say that it distributed the whole of the transport into huge unwieldy companies, too large to fit some units, too small to fit others. The result was that they were no sooner formed than in most cases they were broken up. Responsibility and supervision, which were the objects that had been ostensibly aimed at in this reform, were of course impossible when half of a company was, say, at Kimberley and the other half at Bloemfontein, with but one officer answerable for the whole. There is not space here to enumerate the many other defects of the system ;

but it must at least be added that it dislocated hopelessly all the existing arrangements as to the accounts and the pay of drivers, with the inevitable consequence of waste and extravagance. It is true that Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener, and one or two more declare that the march to Bloemfontein could not have been accomplished without these changes; but they fail to prove their case, for the balance of evidence and opinion is against them. Lord Kitchener bases his statement upon the assumption that, under the old system, the transport belonging to each unit was "locked up" with it; but as this assumption is demonstrably incorrect, his case falls to the ground. It would seem indeed that Lord Kitchener's knowledge of the subject was no more accurate than his chief's; and it is curious that, by Sir William Nicholson's own evidence, the transport under the new system got into confusion directly the march upon Bloemfontein began. It is also remarkable, though it is certain, that the Natal army found the old system of transport to answer admirably from the beginning to the end, as well during the march of sixty miles across country from Volksrust to Belfast, as during two months of campaigning in the Northern Transvaal at a distance of from forty to sixty miles from the railway. It is significant further that by the time the army reached Pretoria it had been found necessary, as Army Orders can prove, to revive the old system in very many respects, and that the work of restoring what had been so hastily destroyed was continued throughout the war. It is, finally, most singular that in the manoeuvres of this year the whole business of transport and supply was conducted on the very system which Lord Roberts had condemned in 1900,

and yet in 1903 declared to have been satisfactory in every respect.

This subject has been dwelt upon at some length, because the consequences of Lord Roberts's changes in the transport were, as will presently be seen, far-reaching beyond estimation. On February 10th he arrived at Modder River to open his campaign. His position was certainly a favourable one. Natal was off his hands, and together with Natal a large force of the enemy. He had plenty of men, and in fact was entering upon the war under more auspicious conditions than would have been possible even if the Government had made due preparation and put its men into the field as early as it ought. Now, however, the threats from Kimberley which had already ruined one plan of campaign rose up to imperil another.¹ On February 11th, therefore, the Cavalry Division started on its march round Cronje's left flank, and pushed on rapidly, with frightful loss of horses, through a waterless country into Kimberley itself, which it entered on the 15th. This march wrought havoc with the Division; and after all Kimberley was in no danger. Cronje was bound to move as soon as his flank was turned, and to leave open the way to the city from the south; and it was not likely that the besieging army would remain before it for long after the covering army had been withdrawn. It is evident that General French had no orders to operate against Cronje, for he moved out on February 16th, though unsuccessfully, to pursue the besieging army. Meanwhile, upon the 15th, Cronje had slipped away eastward behind French, and, though the British infantry

¹ See Lord Roberts's evidence before the War Commission, i., 462, and General Kekewich's evidence, ii., 566-7.

engaged his rearguard, he rapidly gained upon them, and on the night of the 16th was well ahead of them on his way to Bloemfontein. He would no doubt have escaped altogether, had not General French, on receiving orders to follow him, contrived by a forced march of five and thirty miles and a happy divination of his plans to head him, and thus to seal the fate of his force. The fact, however, remains that but for the apparent necessity of occupying Kimberley the cavalry need have proceeded no further than Modder River; in which case there would have been no occasion for the long marches backward and forward which ruined the efficiency of the Division.

But worse days for the cavalry were now to come. Under the new system approved by Lord Roberts the supplies for his force were loaded in 500 ox-waggons, 200 of which, as a first instalment, followed the troops in a vast unwieldy column. Under the old system every commanding officer was held responsible for the safety of the transport belonging to his battalion, brigade, or division; but under the reforms initiated by Lord Roberts the escort furnished for these 200 waggons for some reason did not exceed 100 mounted men and 80 infantry. Naturally the Boers attacked the convoy, which, however, was most gallantly defended until ample reinforcements had come up to save it, when by Lord Roberts's order it was abandoned in the night. This occurred on February 15th; and the result was that the 6th Division was placed on half-rations on the 16th, while 200 more waggons of the heavy convoy were ordered to push on by forced marches to overtake the army. Most fortunately General French had managed to keep the old system of transport for the Cavalry Division; and, since his

replenishing column was at hand, Lord Kitchener was able on the 16th to load it up, and to order it to proceed at once to Paardeberg to deliver supplies to the whole army. Thus this relic of the old system practically saved the situation.

In time the second heavy convoy arrived at Paardeberg, where it did the double duty of replenishing transport and rolling magazines, necessarily with frightful over-driving of beaten oxen and incessant labour to the officers. Every day the difficulties increased as the exhausted animals died; and a few days after Cronje's surrender it was necessary to abandon and burn large quantities of oats, though horses were dying of starvation only twelve miles away. In the dearth of supplies it was also necessary to limit the men's allowance to a biscuit and a half a day, and, since the slaughter-cattle were taken for purposes of draught, the supply of meat also began to fail. A reward of £1 was then offered to the men for every beast that they could capture, and as a result a great many trek-oxen were brought in which had fallen out of the yoke, and for which we had bound ourselves to pay compensation to a contractor. It is easy to see how discipline and economy must have been promoted by this expedient. There are dark hints that a second convoy, in addition to that abandoned by Lord Roberts, was captured about this time, and it is certain that the Boers upon one occasion made a descent upon Paardeberg and carried off 100 oxen. Had they shown a little more boldness, the whole of the army would have shared the fate of some hundreds of the horses, and would have been not half but wholly starved.

Unfortunately Lord Roberts's reforms had been found wanting in other directions also, for he had

reduced the ambulances of the Bearer-Companies from ten to two. The result was that there was no adequate conveyance for the sick and wounded, and that the only course was to load them in empty ox-waggons. Lord Roberts, while dealing with this question, is careful to point out that on the veldt ox-waggons compare not unfavourably with ambulances for this purpose; and, if they be covered, no doubt he is correct. But these waggons were not covered. "It was a pitiful sight," says an eye-witness, "to see some hundreds of wounded men leaving in open ox-waggons for the base in pouring rain." It is not without significance that within six weeks the full number of ambulances was restored to the Bearer-Companies as under the old system.

Two more actions required to be fought before Bloemfontein could be reached, but the horses of the cavalry, owing to starvation, were too weak to turn either of them to real account; and when the army entered the town on March 13th it was to all intent demobilised,—demobilised after one month in the field, and a march of 120 miles in twenty-eight days. It is true that Lord Roberts sets down his loss of mules at seven per cent. and of oxen at six and a half per cent. only, stating that he had still 8,908 oxen available when he reached Bloemfontein; but he does not specify whether they were available for slaughter or for draught. It is to be noticed also that he has omitted to add to the total, upon which he bases his percentage of loss, certain additional transport brought down by the brigade of Guards, though it cannot be doubted that the animals with this brigade have been included among the available survivors. It seems therefore imprudent to accept these figures without further explanation. As they stand they are quite in-

sufficient to account for Lord Roberts's inactivity in following up an enemy which, for the moment, was demoralised.

On March 15th, 1900, Lord Roberts described himself as "halt-ing for a few days at Bloemfontein in order to give the troops, horses, and transport a much needed rest," and to collect supplies and stores for a further advance. The "few days" were prolonged to nearly two months. "The army needed rest," he wrote on May 21st, 1900, "after the unusual exertion, which it had been called upon to make, and by which its mobility had been greatly impaired." We know what happened during those two months. Several thousand Boers were retiring in hot haste from Cape Colony and might have been intercepted; but no effort was made to intercept them. The columns sent out by Lord Roberts were weak and ill-supported, so that, far from pursuing, they were pursued. On March 29th one of these isolated columns was caught at Sanna's Post, within fifteen miles of head-quarters, and suffered very heavy loss in men, guns, and waggons. The blame for this disaster is laid upon Sir Henry Colville, though it is indisputable that he did not arrive upon the scene until the action was over. Whether he could then have retrieved the situation in some measure I cannot pretend to determine; but his evidence shows clearly enough the reason why he did not arrive in time. "The day I was ordered out to Sanna's Post, or rather Thabanchu, I had to go to head-quarters and see the Director of Transport and go through all sorts of channels to collect transport for next day, whereas, if one had had one's regimental transport, one could have had it there and marched at an hour's notice." So keen and so

insatiable was the nemesis which followed Lord Roberts's reform of his transport. This disaster was quickly followed by another at Reddersburg, where a detachment of infantry which was marching by Lord Roberts's own order from Dewetsdorp to the railway, was surrounded and captured; and this again was followed by the surrounding of another isolated force at Wepener. Even to a civilian this succession of mishaps to weak detached bodies suggests an incoherent and disjointed scheme of operations.

Meanwhile the waterworks at Bloemfontein, being left unguarded, were destroyed by the Boers, and the troops were compelled to resort to a tainted water-supply. The men, weakened by privation which, from circumstances which were not wholly unavoidable, had been excessive, fell down by hundreds with enteric fever. There is no need to repeat the dismal story, which we should all of us be glad to forget. Suffice it that, elated by the British losses and by their own success, the Boers regained confidence in themselves, and rallied to fresh combat both in the Free State and in Natal.

While Lord Roberts's force remained stationary at Bloemfontein, the army in Natal, by his order, remained stationary also. Sir Redvers Buller before he left England had declared that the true policy of the war was to subdue the Orange Free State completely before dealing with the Transvaal. Never doubting, therefore, that Lord Roberts would clear his flanks and communications before going further, he wished to force the passes of the Drakensberg, while the enemy before him was still shaken, and to send a division to reinforce Lord Roberts through one of them. Lord Roberts, however, did not favour the project, nor indeed any other that was suggested to him

from Natal, for he was already enamoured of the idea of a rapid march upon Pretoria. "I felt," he wrote on August 14th, 1900, "that the enormous advantage to be gained by striking at the enemy's capital before he had time to recover from the defeats he had already sustained would more than counterbalance the risk of having our lines of communication interfered with,—a risk which had to be taken into consideration." This was, as the event proved, a most unfortunate miscalculation, due chiefly to Lord Roberts's inexperience of new countries. It is true that, knowing himself to be engaged in what is called a People's War, he might have found in the American War of Independence, and in Napoleon's campaigns in Spain and Russia, terrible warnings against the fallacy of confounding the capture of a capital with the conquest of a people; but no amount of reading could have been so valuable as that actual experience which he did not possess. Could he have asked of himself and answered such a question as, "Would the capture of Christchurch conquer the South Island of New Zealand?" he would have saved many millions of money and many thousands of lives to his country.

Without any adequate attempt therefore to subdue the Free State, but on the assumption that its forces would follow him to the north, Lord Roberts began his great advance. The retreat of the Boer leaders, whom it was judged most important to capture, lay eastward towards the sea; and it was therefore expected the army would keep its right in advance, in order to sweep them and the whole of their forces round to westward. Everything, however, was sacrificed to the capture of Pretoria, and the British left was kept forward throughout. Little loss was inflicted

during the advance upon the enemy, who watched only for the appearance of the cavalry, which bore the brunt of the work, to fight the rear-guard actions in which they excel, and to retire at their ease. The operations were so conducted that many with the army judged that the generals must have received orders not to fight. On May 31st Johannesburg surrendered, and on June 5th Pretoria surrendered. Thus Lord Roberts's "enormous advantage" was gained; but it may be questioned whether anyone except the Boers was one penny the better.

Meanwhile Sir Redvers Buller, who on May 2nd had been freed from his enforced inaction, had turned the Biggarsberg, and was preparing to capture Laing's Nek. Lord Roberts had previously told him that he expected all the passes of the Drakensberg would be clear by the time he should reach Kroonstadt; but this, like other of his calculations, proved to be incorrect, for the Boers whom he had brushed aside planted themselves in front of the Natal army. On June 5th he added a telegram saying that, as he was in possession of Pretoria, it was hardly necessary to take Laing's Nek, but that Sir Redvers might see what kind of opposition he was likely to meet with. After operations lasting five days Sir Redvers drove the enemy from Laing's Nek on June 11th; but on the 12th he received another telegram from Lord Roberts that Laing's Nek was to be held in strength, and that Sir Redvers had better leave it in the enemy's possession and move towards Standerton, because his own communications were cut. It is hardly surprising that they should have been cut. The entire manhood of the Free State had been left at liberty to cut them, and they had learned enough of Lord

Roberts's methods to know that this was their game, and that they were free to play it.

The enquiry of the War Commission ends abruptly with the capture of Pretoria, though why that term was fixed by the Government it is difficult to explain, except upon the hypothesis that it might delude the public into the belief that the capture of Bloemfontein and Pretoria achieved the subjugation of the two South African Republics. It would be extremely interesting to know how it was that De Wet escaped at Olifant's Nek, and Botha in the Lydenburg country, and what became of the prisoners, exceeding those of Paardeberg in number, who were taken by Sir Archibald Hunter in the Brandwater basin. During all this period Lord Roberts was in command; and it is not easy to see why the enquiry should have ended before that period expired. We are indeed furnished with a very long account of the battle of Diamond Hill, fought on June 11th,—an action which one would gladly believe to have been a great and successful one. But it is difficult to discover that it was more injurious to the enemy or more decisive in its consequences than other engagements which took place during the advance from Bloemfontein. However, as we all know, the operations were continued, Mr. Kruger fled to Europe, the railways were occupied all over the country; and in November, 1900, Lord Roberts left South Africa for England, declaring at Cape Town before he sailed that the war was practically over.

Surely a more remarkable way of ending a war was never known. One is reminded of the scene in *ALICE IN WONDERLAND*, when the Dodo closed the Caucus-race. That sapient bird, it will be remembered, had set

a number of competitors running from no particular starting-point over no particular course towards no particular goal, until after an interval he cried out suddenly, "The race is over." "Yes," answered all the competitors eagerly, "*but who has won?*"—a question which reduced the Dodo to long silence and meditation. Surely Lord Roberts's methods bear a singular resemblance to the Dodo's. Evidently he assumed that the possession of Pretoria would suffice to compass all ends of the war, and so long as he reached it he appears to have regarded little else. "The exact shape doesn't matter," observed the Dodo, as he marked out the course for the race; and similarly Lord Roberts appears to have thought that, beyond a march to Pretoria, the exact plan of operations did not matter. Thus he extended his troops along a vulnerable line of anything from eight hundred to a thousand miles, where they could everywhere be stricken and could nowhere strike. He made no effort to protect those who had given him their submission, nor would he allow them the means to protect themselves. He left his enemy unhurt and unawed, free to work mischief along the whole length and breadth of the country; and his enemy did not fail to take advantage of the opportunity. Unhappily a People's War is not a Caucus-race. The war was not over. It had only been begun and begun at the wrong end.

Wisdom after the event, it will be said. In reply let me refer to a memorandum by an officer of distinction, which was handed to the Secretary of State for War on September 24th, 1899, a fortnight before

the war broke out. "To advance on Pretoria and leave a hostile Free State to take its own time and opportunity for cutting the communications and stopping the flow of supplies would, I think, be running an unnecessary and most dangerous risk An advance through the Free State would have every chance of disposing of that State first and settling with the Transvaal alone afterwards."¹ This was precisely the risk which Lord Roberts courted, and the chance which he rejected. The whole of Lord Kitchener's difficulties were due to the neglect of these warnings. He was obliged to take over matters as he found them, and the confusion, it is said, was such that it needed six months of hard work to reunite detachments to their own regiments, officers to their own men, and men to their own officers. This may seem a small matter to those to whom a hundred men are a hundred men; but soldiers are not distributed into companies, squadrons, and regiments only that they may work the better with comrades and officers who are known to them, but also that they may be equipped and paid with regularity and economy. We shall never know what sums have been wasted by all this confusion; though with cruel injustice junior officers have in many cases been called upon to make them good. For all this waste as well as for the huge expense caused by the prolongation of the war it seems to me that Lord Roberts, and he alone, must be held responsible.

J. W. FORTESCUE.

¹ See Report of the War Commission, pp. 270-1.

